THE Watchtower

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The WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

When our worthy President and also his Holiness the Pope requested Christian people to pray God for the cessation of the European war, we declared that the prayer was not in harmony with the divine arrangement and would not be answered. We pointed out that according to the Scriptures the 2520 years of Gentile dominion ended in September, 1914; and that the war is the one predicted in the Scriptures as associated with the great day of Almighty God—"the day of vengeance of our God." We pointed out the Word of the Lord through the Prophet Joel respecting the gathering of all nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat—the valley of death.—Joel 3:1-12.

The experiences of Elijah in the closing of his ministry showed us how the great day of the Lord will be ushered in: first, the wind rending the rocks, representing the present war; secondly, the great earthquake, representing the revolution that will follow the present war; thirdly, the fire, representing the anarchy that will follow the revolution; fourthly, "the still, small voice" of God—which will follow the anarchy in the world—through Messiah's kingdom speaking, "Peace! be still!" "'Beat your spears into pruninghooks and your swords into plowshares, and learn war no more!"—Micah 4:3.

We see no reason for thinking that the present war will terminate until either Great Britain or Germany has a decisive victory upon the sea. The strife between these two has been fomenting for thirty years. Each has wished the destruction of the other's fleet and colonies, but dreaded the war which would accomplish these ends, well knowing in advance that it would be a terrible one. The unfortunate circumstances which suddenly led up to Austria's assault upon Servia, Russia's defense of Servia, and France's revenge for Alsace-Lorraine, involving Germany on both sides, presented Great Britain the long-sought opportunity for crushing her commercial rival. It seems improbable that the British would now consent to cessation of war until a complete victory would be had over Germany, or until her own existence would be in jeopardy.

So far as at present may be discerned, nothing very decisive may be expected before Spring. Meantime, the soldiers are perishing, vast debts are accumulating and the industries of peace are being neglected. By and by, doubtless, the people will awaken to a saner view of the matter, and ask themselves why the people of Europe cannot live as happily there as they can live together in the United States. By and by they will raise the question as to why it should be wrong to murder one another at any private behest, and yet right to slay one another at the command of kings and kaisers. By that time the earthquake stage of the trouble will be near.

When the earthquake, or revolution, so prominently mentioned in the Scriptures shall have come, that, no doubt will be the time when the kings and the captains of industry, of finance and of politics will in self-defense greatly exalt the power of religious leaders. Then we may expect that the Federation of Churches will exercise a power in the world such as has not been since the days of Papal supremacy. In the symbolic language of Revelation, that will be the time in which the "image of the beast" will have life and work great wonders, threatening, commanding, in the name of heaven.—Rev. 13:11-18.

MEANTIME, WHAT SHALL WE DO?

The effect of the war is not unfavorable in all respects. From Europe we have the word that a great religious impression is being made upon the people by the war. In their own distress and the distress of their loved ones on the battlefield, there is a natural tendency to turn to heaven for help. At the same time there is a quickening of understanding. People are more ready to think than previously. Told that the soldiers are fighting for the Lord's cause, and with the implication given that those who die are more or less martyrs for the cause of right (and are therefore heirs of heaven), the people are fighting valiantly.

The newspapers tell them how the Catholics and the Protestants of Great Britain are praying for the Allies against their enemies; and how the German churches, Catholic and Protestant, are praying for the Germans and against the Allies. The people are wondering and will wonder still more as they think further as to how these different prayers can be answered—how the Germans could be taken to heaven for fighting against the Allies and the Allies be taken to heaven for fighting against the Germans! With all their thinking some will be sure to wonder whether or not these are reasonable conclusions, and what is their foundation.

On the other hand, they will think of the hell of fire and the purgatory of suffering taught them from infancy; and if all the soldiers are going to heaven, they will wonder who is going to hell. The sober thinking which the war is engendering will, no doubt, be helpful in the end, however unreasonable some of the conditions may be in the beginning. Saner views must ultimately come.

The American people are in some respects suffering more from the war than are the peoples of Europe; for the traffic of the world is temporarily hindered. They have not the business stimulus which prevails in Europe, because of military preparation there.

Americans, too, have a better opportunity of taking a calm, unprejudiced view of the war than have the people of Europe, who are so close to it and so liable to be influenced by the specious arguments of crafty leaders who tell them that the war is necessary for the maintenance of civilization—putting on their construction as to what is real civilization. Partisan spirit, called patriotism, runs high in the countries engaged in the strife. The newspapers defend and uphold the governments; so do the preachers; so do the orators. The few who take the saner and correct view of matters are forced to silence.

From a distance the war seems most unreasonable. Germany should be allowed to build as many ships as she desires, until her people, vexed and worn out with the cost of militarism, will insist on a change of governmental policy. Great Britain should be allowed to have as many ships as she wants and as her people are willing to pay for. Each nation should be allowed to do all the business she can do justly, honestly.

Christian ministers should have long ago pointed out to the people that the present kingdoms of Europe are not God's kingdoms, but human institutions; and that all these, according to the Bible, will eventually pass away at the inauguration of Messiah's kingdom. The reverence of the Lord should have been taught, and patient waiting for his time and way. The effect of the war has certainly in America been favorable to Christian enlightenment. People who may be said never to have thought before on religious subjects are thinking now, thinking hard, and many are reaching reasonably sane conclusions.

The work which our Society has been doing in the world for several years is bearing some fruitage. People who sneered

at the thought of Christ's Millennial kingdom being imminent, and who trusted for a time that the world would be converted by the nominal churches, are now awakening to the realization of the fact that the fulfilment of the Lord's Prayer is the only real salvation of the world, and are continually praying, with more meaning than before, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as in heaven." They are beginning to realize that not only have the heathens abroad doubled within a century, but that the heathenism at home is much greater than they had believed, and that the so-called Christianization of modern civilization is but a thin veneer.

OPPORTUNITIES NEVER SO GREAT AS NOW

All these conditions are favorable. Every tract and every book circulated now is likely to do three or four times as much good as in times past; for the people are getting awake to read, awake to think. Not only so, but they are more and more coming to doubt the theology of the creeds, and to see that the majority of ministers neither teach from the Bible nor believe in it as the only and the inspired revelation of the divine purposes.

We are well aware that some of our dear readers have the thought that the Gentile Times having closed, the Gospel message was closed. Some of these brethren feel that it is useless to continue the message. We cannot sympathize with their reasoning. The divine command was that they should preach the Word, not until the close of Gentile Times, but until the church would be completed. Just how long it will be before the church will be completed we cannot say, but we do believe it is our privilege to tell the Good Tidings as long as there are hungry hearts to receive the message; and we do believe that some of those coming to a knowledge of the truth now are amongst the finest characters that have ever come into the truth.

We believe also that the evidences strongly favor the thought that some of those who have recently come into the light are fully received of the Lord into the blessings and privileges of the church—his members. Some of them have the real spirit of sacrifice, which is one of the sure signs. They manifest a love for the truth, which is another favorable sign. The Lord grants them clearness of understanding in the truth, which is another indication of their having been begotten of the holy Spirit. Some of them are willing and glad to suffer for the sake of the truth, which is one of the best evidences that we could ask that they have received the Spirit of Christ.

So long as we see such evidences of the Lord's blessing by the preaching of his word, should we falter, should we hesitate? Should we not rather be enthusiastic and redouble our efforts in the service of the King and for the service of the brethren, that they may be delivered from the bondage of ignorance and superstition into the glorious light of the knowledge of God?

We are asked, Did not the forty years of harvest seem to close with the end of Gentile times? We answer, Yes; we had so expected. But we remember that the Jewish harvest, which was a picture the Lord drew, was a little different from our harvest. Under the law, the Jews were commanded to leave the corners of their fields unreaped, so that there might be something for the gleaners to do after the regular harvesters had done their work, that while the barns were being filled and the tares were being bundled and burned, making ready for a new crop, the gleaners might gather the wheat from the corners of the harvest field. Perhaps the present work is largely that of gleaning. It would appear so.

Looking back at the Jewish harvest, we perceive that it ended in the year 69 A. D., but that certain features of the harvest work continued over into the year A. D. 70. The burning of the chaff took place then. While that was in progress and the nation of Israel was being overthrown, doubtless there was a gleaning work, as the eyes of understanding began to open and as the people began to realize the fulfilment of Scripture. And just so it seems to be here. Shall we not be earnest in our endeavor to do this gleaning work? Surely we will be if we still maintain our love for the Lord's name and character! This will lead us to tell forth his glorious character, to show forth the errors which have beclouded the name of our heavenly Father by misrepresenting his divine plan of the ages. Surely we will be energetic in this work if our love for the brethren continues; for we see many who seem to be true children of God still in great darkness respecting the great and wonderful truths to which our eyes of understanding have opened.

WHAT ABOUT THE MONEY SUPPLY?

But some may say, "Did we not read between the lines in the Society's Annual Report that the financial streams were drying up? And have we not heard that thirteen DRAMAS have been withdrawn, representing fifty exhibitions per day explanatory of the divine plan of the ages? And does this not indicate that God's time has come for closing down the work?"

Our reply is that these things are so, but that we have a reason to surmise that God intends to send us in his own way further financial support, that his message may go forth with great force throughout the whole world! With this in view, we are having all the DRAMAS overhauled and put into good order, anticipating that the funds to operate them will be in our hands shortly. Although we are still walking by faith and not by sight, we urge upon all the dear friends everywhere to slack not their hands in the divine service, but rather to continue to labor and to wait, assured of God's favor and blessing in any event.

More than this, we suggest that all the dear brethren who have been active in the DRAMA work, and who are temporarily discontinued, do not enter into other business permanently, but hold themselves in readiness for this wonderful means of proclaiming the truth which reaches so many people and gives them so much satisfaction and enlightenment respecting the Bible and its true message. We also urge others who have not been with the DRAMA, but who may have knowledge of operating moving-picture films and stereopticon slides, that they make themselves as proficient as possible and advise us of their willingness and readiness and ability for this service.

We request all I. B. S. A. classes to consider well if they have any brethren of special ability whom they could recommend to the Society for such openings as may come: (1) Men clear in the truth and loyal to it, ready to lay down their lives for it; (2) men of good address and possessing a talent for public speaking and an ability to speak grammatically. We want to have a list of these, that we may call for them if opportunity offers. But be sure that you conscientiously answer the questions above, and that you do not recommend any to the Society except those who would be a credit to the truth and its service. There may be other ways in which some could serve without the talent of public speaking and without any particular knowledge of grammar; but for the public service the Society believes it to be the Lord's will that his truth should be presented in a credible form.

Quite a number of our readers have had more or less experience in colporteur work. Some of them have withdrawn from the service because of inability to meet their expenses, even though the Society gave them the books at less than cost—one-half the selling price. Any such colporteur, who has some ability and who could re-enter the work under favorable conditions, is requested to drop us a postcard stating willingness to re-enter and stating the number of books he was able to sell when in the service. Some of these might be assisted in one way or another so as to help them back again to this very important colporteur work. We have methods and instructions now, by the use of which many are successful who formerly were unsuccessful.

We want to get this list, so that, if a way should open up that we expect, we may know how to communicate with you promptly. We ask for this address on a postcard, so that it may be easily filed.

The volunteer work for 1915 should not be forgotten. As stated before, the people are awake and reading, whereas before many of them neglected the literature handed them. Now is the time to put a piece of literature into every home in your own city and to ascertain whether or not the adjoining towns and villages have been served—thus to extend your service in the harvest work. We are ready to supply this literature free, paying the freight to destination. Send in your orders that they may be filled as promptly as possible.

EUREKA DRAMA SUCCESS

In our Report we pointed out that, although only recently started, the EUREKA DRAMA service is proving a very efficient one, especially where it is taken into the small villages and cities. Empty churches, court houses, schoolhouses, etc., are very generally obtainable, when the people know that they are to have a very interesting entertainment free of charge. Some of the classes have obtained these EUREKA DRAMAS by a partial payment down, the Society waiting on them for their greater convenience to pay the remainder. As these remainders are paid we are able to give out other DRAMA sets. Thus the work progresses. The blessing in every case seems to be not only to the public, but especially to those of the dear friends who are serving the public.

Be of good courage and the Lord shall strengthen your heart! Let us be loyal, faithful, and forget not the cultivation of all the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. Thus shall we best be prepared for the glorious consummation of our hopes, which we believe so near at hand!

RIGHTEOUS AND UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER

"Love is not easily provoked."—1 Corinthians 13:5.

In the chapter from which our text is taken, St. Paul sets forth the prime necessity for the cultivation and development of Love, without which, whatever else we may attain, we shall be nothing in the sight of God. The Apostle tells us in the words of our text that love is not easily provoked. Evidently he uses the word provoked here in a very different sense from its meaning where he says that we should "consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works." (Hebrews 10:24) The thought of the latter text is to incite to good works, to call forth love in others, to exert an influence favorable to righteousness. The thought in our present text, however, is that of being excited, or aroused, to anger. St. Paul declares that love is not easily thus aroused, but is long-suffering.

We might say, strictly speaking, that it is not the quality of love itself that would ever be moved to anger. Yet righteous anger—a just indignation aroused by our love for the principles of righteousness—is not incompatible with love. "God is love," and the Scriptures assure us that he "is angry with the wicked every day." His anger is righteous indignation against sin.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS ANGER

Looking to God as our great Example, we see that his love was manifested on behalf of his human creatures in the beginning. It was love for humanity that provided the Garden of Eden with all its blessings and its perfect life, just as his love for the angels had provided all their blessings. But when sin came in, love stepped back; or in other words, justice was the special attribute of God then manifested. It was better for mankind that there should be this punishment for sin; for from the foundation of the world God, foreknowing man's fall, had purchased his redemption. So even in the sentence of death his love for man persisted. But God is the opponent of sin, and when his law was violated, love, or he who is the embodiment of love, was provoked to righteous anger.

God's indignation was likewise kindled against his chosen people, the Jews, when he said to the Prophet (Jeremiah 8:19), "Why have they provoked me to anger?" Many Scriptures speak of God's anger. That anger has ever burned against sin. It has been resting upon the world for six thousand years. But the love of God has in no way been violated by this attitude against the condemned world. Therefore, love can be justly provoked to anger. He who declares that justice is the foundation of his throne never indulges in sentiments which are not in the fullest harmony with that justice. But he has arranged for the recovery of this condemned race. The love of God has made this provision for his fallen creatures.

GOD'S LOVE HELD IN ABEYANCE

But love is not easily provoked, not unjustly provoked. It required an act of intentional disobedience on the part of father Adam to provoke God to anger. It was not because mother Eve was deceived that the sentence came upon the world. The anger of God came upon mankind and the sentence of death was pronounced because of father Adam's sin, which was committed with full knowledge. And during all these six thousand years of sin God's love has been held in abeyance, so to speak, provoked to the point of withdrawal.

But all the while God's character has not changed. He did not cause the diabolical conditions which have existed since the fall of man. Neither love nor justice, as embodied in Jehovah, would sanction sin; "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) And everything that goes with death as its natural result is a part of that penalty. But God has permitted these conditions, knowing that by his power they would all be overruled for the ultimate good of mankind. The great adversary of God is responsible for the disaster which sin has wrought upon the earth. But the Almighty will yet cause Satan to work out good for the children of men, ultimately crushing, annihilating, the great enemy of righteousness.—Hebrews 2:14.

The love of God, thus held in abeyance, has bided its time, to be revealed to astonished man when the due time shall have come. Nearly two thousand years ago love manifested itself on behalf of the world, when God sent forth his only-begotten Son to be man's redeemer. He came to earth and gave his life—a willing sacrifice for human sin. Then the call went forth to gather the church, the class who were in God's purpose to be the bride of his Son, to be associated with him in the great future work for the race of Adam. During this Gospel age, this church is being gathered, and in due time will be exalted in kingdom glory. Then God's love will manifest itself to our race. The kingdom of God will lift up mankind from sin and degradation and death, into the light and glory of the Lord—all who are willing to accept life on God's terms.

SPECIAL CRISES IN CHRISTIAN LIFE

How earnestly we as children of God should watch and pray that we may indeed be fitted for our great future work—now so near! There is a danger that love will not be sufficiently strong in us; for by reason of the fall, sin and selfishness have come to be preponderating influences in the world. These, operating for six thousand years, have made man very deficient in love, sympathy, brotherly-kindness and long-suffering. Now there is a greater tendency toward anger, malice, hatred, strife, than toward love. Consequently, when God accepts us into his family, he tells us that one of the first requirements is love. Love must grow in our hearts and minds, and permeate all our thoughts, words and actions.

Our fallen flesh, helped on by the unseen "powers of the air," will seek to prevent our attaining this necessary condition; and after we have attained it, strong pressure will at times be brought to bear upon us at new creatures to induce us to withdraw from this position. From time to time the child of God has experiences with others of the brethren that seem to threaten his spiritual health, or even his spiritual life. The powers of darkness assail him, endeavoring to encourage the feelings and sentiments which he is strongly tempted to adopt. He has come to a crisis in his Christian experience. He must go forward or backward. He cannot stand still. The struggle is on. Will this severe trial prove a stepping-stone to lift him nearer God, or will it be a stone of stumbling, to overthrow him?

At such crucial times, the only refuge is prayer. The Lord permits these very trials to test our mettle as children of God. The adversary will endeavor to place the matter before our agitated minds in the most unfavorable light as regards the brother or sister. He will seek to pervert the judgment, and to deceive the mind as to the real facts in the case; and our flesh responds to this view of the matter. The only safe course is to refuse to entertain in the slightest degree the thoughts of bitterness trying to find a lodgment in our mind and heart, and to cry at once to the Lord for strength and help in our time of need, seeking counsel of his Word bearing upon our proper attitude in such an emergency. Let us remember the words of the hymn we have often sung:

"Yield not to temptation,
For yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you
Some other to win.
Fight manfully onward,
Dark passions subdue;
Look ever to Jesus,
He'll carry you through."

"FORGIVE, AND YE SHALL BE FORGIVEN"

"Let us, then, be kind and forbearing one with another, brethren, seeking to put the kindest construction upon the words, the actions and the natural tendencies of one another, remembering our own peculiarities and foibles. Let us remember that each of us is blemished by the fall, and that those of the brethren who try us most may have had hereditary tendencies and environments in earlier life of which we are not aware, and which would make us very pitiful if we knew. Let us remember also that we may be altogether unaware of some of our own weaknesses and mannerisms, which may grate upon others. We should be much more careful to note our own mistakes and faults than those of other brethren of the Lord.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger [fleshly anger], and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and ye be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"—and still forgives you. (Ephesians 4:31, 32) "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have occasion of complaint against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are also called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."—Colossians 3:12-16.

After the child of the Lord has gained the victory in a struggle like this, and has through prayer and determined effort brought the Arm of God to his deliverance, he is a stronger Christian than before the trial came. He has taken a stride forward in the narrow way; he has taken a firmer hold on God, and will be the better enabled to conquer in the next testing. But every failure to thus overcome leaves the child of God weaker and less able to resist the onslaught of his flesh and of the adversary and his evil hosts, and the less sure of being a final overcomer.

In speaking of love as respects the church of Christ, the

Apostle assures us that if we would be pleasing to the Lord we must develop richly this grace. Those who possess this quality in goodly measure will not be easily provoked to anger, will not readily take offense, will not be too watchful lest their rights and dignity be infringed upon. Those who have little love will be easily angered and offended. Let us keep self down, and diligently continue the work of its crucifixion, looking ever to him from whom cometh our help. The love which our Lord appreciates is longsuffering. This does not mean that there would never be occasions for just indignation, righteous anger. There should be a feeling of righteous anger when we see great injustice. Why? Because injustice is wrong. God is angry with injustice, when it is committed knowingly, or willingly. And so God's people should have no sympathy with injustice.

LOVE SUPERADDED TO JUSTICE

If the children of God do not carefully cultivate the quality of justice, they will get themselves into that attitude where they will not appreciate justice at all. But while appreciating what is right and what is wrong, we are to go further, and see that we cultivate diligently the quality of love, sympathy, charity. None can say that his own estimate of what constitutes justice and love is entirely right, and that the other man's estimate is entirely wrong, especially when this other is a brother or sister in Christ, seeking to develop the same Christlike qualities as ourself. Our viewpoints cannot be always the same; therefore let us not be too sure that our own viewpoint is the correct one, and the other view wrong, where there is any possibility of our being mistaken.

No follower of Christ is so well developed that he can say, I do not need any further instructions along the lines of justice and love, but my brother needs it. And in our experiences with the brethren, where the other one seems to be at fault, let us say to ourselves, Here is a brother who perhaps has had more disadvantages than I have had. He is a brother of mine according to the Spirit. He seems to me to be doing something wrong, but I sympathize with him because he probably does not know that his action is wrong. Or I may be wrong myself. If he saw the matter from my viewpoint, he would do differently. I will not judge him, but leave that for the Almighty, who is infallible in judgment and to whom judgment belongs.—1 Corinthians 4:5.

SYMPATHY FOR ALL MEN

God has no sympathy with sin; but he has so much sympathy for sinners that he has provided his well-beloved Son to redeem and uplift the sinner. He has set apart a thousand years for this work of human uplift. We note injustice; we ought to note it. But it is not our province to flay, to inflict punishment. We are to "judge nothing before the time." We see acts commited that shock our moral sense. We are to say to ourselves, I believe that act to be criminal; but it is not for me to settle with that wrong-doer. God knows to what extent the individual is responsible; I do not. It is my duty as far as possible to view him from the standpoint of sympathy. It is my duty to assist him if it is in my power, if I have a proper opportunity—to help him out of his wrong views into right views. But even in this I am to be "wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove." The conduct is wrong, but I cannot know how wrong the individual may be.

So love looks out and sees that the whole world is in much difficulty through the fall. And love says, Be gentle toward all; be meek; be forbearing. We are ever to remember that we are in a world or sin, pain, sickness, death. From this viewpoint, love will not easily be provoked, but will think kindly and sympathetically of others. Thus, beloved, shall we grow up into Christ, our glorious Head, in all things, until, made perfect and complete through his grace, we shall be presented to the Father "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—Ephesians 5:27.

THE FIRST ARMAGEDDON BATTLE

JANUARY 10.—JUDGES 4:4-24; 5:1-22.

SISERA AND BARAK—MRS. DEBORAH AND MRS. JAEL—WAS THE LATTER A MURDERESS?—HOW "THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES FOUGHT AGAINST SISERA."

"The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of their troubles."—Psalm 34:17.

We have heretofore pointed out that the great Battle of Armageddon—the anti-typical one—is near—that it will quickly follow the present world-war. Today's Study relates to the first of the great battles in the Valley of Megiddo, noted for its many slaughters, and therefore made the basis of the divine prediction respecting the "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation," which will precede and prepare the way for Messiah's glorious rule of a thousand years.—1 Cor. 15:24-26; Rev. 20:6.

The Israelites, guilty of idolatry, had, according to God's covenant with them, been chastened by the permitting of their enemies to vanquish them. They had come to great straits. Their enemies had become strong and high-handed. General Sisera, of the Canaanites, having humbled the Israelites of North Palestine for years, started with a large army, intent upon victories, to the southward. The strength of his army is shown in the statement that it contained nine hundred iron chariots.

By the time he had gotten as far southward as the Valley of Megiddo, messengers reached him, informing him that Barak, a leader among the Israelites, had improved the opportunity of his absence and was also leading southward an army of ten thousand Israelites. Under divine guidance Barak made Mt. Tabor his army base—the same which, in Jesus' day, became known to his followers as the Mount of Transfiguration, where the coming kingdom of Messiah was represented in a vision. Thus we have another remarkable feature of the picture of the future—the association of the vision of the kingdom in proximity with the Armageddon field of disaster picturing the overthrow of present institutions.

A DISCOMFITED ARMY

General Sisera, disdaining the poorly armed Israelites, advanced with his army on both sides of the River Kishon toward Mt. Tabor. Then it was that the word of the Lord came afresh to General Barak, directing him to advance against the army of the Canaanites. The slaughter was a great one, as related in our lesson. Sisera's army was discomfited, so that it scattered. A great storm and cloudburst swelled the river, making quagmires of the lower valleys, rendering useless the chariots of Sisera. His soldiers, fleeing for their lives, were cut down by the Israelites, while other thousands were swept by the freshets down the river to the sea. This interference of God on behalf of his people Israel in figurative language is styled the fighting of the "stars of heaven" against Sisera's army. Similarly in the great Armageddon near at hand it will not be human might that will prevail, but the disconcerted hosts will effect the complete disruption of the present order of things, for "every man's hand shall be against his brother and against his neighbor." (Ezekiel 38:21; Zechariah 8:10; 14:13) It is the cloudburst of truth and the rising waters of knowledge which are bringing to pass this great human catastrophe—which the Lord will overrule for the blessing of the world.

THE POWER OF A FAITHFUL WOMAN

Although the Lord has been pleased usually to use men in connection with his work, not only as typical characters, but also as evangels of the Gospel, nevertheless the Scriptures give us pictures of noble women who, because of the delinquency of men, have been used and almost forced into public service by God's providence. Notable amongst the instances of such in the Bible is the case of Mrs. Deborah. She perceived how neglect of the divine law had borne fruit in the subjugation of her people. She perceived that this was spreading throughout the land of Canaan, and that what was needed was a guide to point the people to the right way—back to God. The Canaanites, whom they had not conquered, had conquered them.

The conquest was permitted by God. It had its incipient state when the Israelites neglected the divine direction that they should live separate from all other people. Instead, they had begun to intermarry with the Canaanites. These, in turn, had enticed their husbands and their children to the heathen gods of worship. Apparently many of Israel who had not gone over to idolatry had nearly lost their knowledge and appreciation of the true God.

The same is a difficulty today in this land—everywhere. The revulsion of Christian people from the monstrous creedal errors of the past has alienated many from the Bible, under the belief that the Bible and the creeds teach the same doctrines. This is the explanation of empty pews and a distaste for religion. What the people need is correct information re-

specting the true God of love and his real plan, as outlined in the Bible.

In the dark hour of Israel's oppression, the princes of the tribes seemed to lack patriotism as well as faith in God. Each tribe was a separate state and there was no cohesion between them—the divinely intended bond of union, the true religion, having relaxed. It was about this time that the Lord, seeking a channel through which to be gracious to his people, found that channel in a woman—Deborah. She realized the situation more keenly than others, probably because more deeply consecrated to God and his service. She removed from her home in the northern part to a central place in the highlands of Ephraim. From there she sent encouraging, stimulating messages to the chief men of the various tribes. She was respected. Her counsel was appreciated. Her advice was sought. In this sense she judged—admonished, guided, assisted—Israel.

FULL DEVOTION OF HEART ESSENTIAL

Deborah is styled a prophetess. This might mean a public teacher, or it might mean one through whom the Lord sent special messages. Some things connected with the story indicate the latter. Surely the Lord used her, and that because she was a willing and consecrated servant of his cause, his people. What a lesson here for all of God's people—that in order to be used in the Lord's service and accomplish things for him and his, full devotion of heart is essential.

At an opportune time, when Sisera's army with nine hundred chariots had proceeded southward to Megiddo, Deborah sent word to Barak, a leader in her tribe—Naphtali. She admonished that now was the time to do something for the deliverance of God's people, and that he should immediately march to battle with ten thousand Israelites. Barak refused unless she would co-operate. She agreed to do so, forewarning him, however, that the honor of the matter would thus be divided with herself, and that he would miss a part of his blessing by reason of his lack of courage. Thus it was that when Barak's army moved to Mt. Tabor, it was under General Barak's command, but a woman was the real mouthpiece or agent of God, in directing the affairs of the battle which brought such signal victory to Israel.

WAS THE WAR JUSTIFIED?—MRS JAEL

General Sisera's chariots stuck in the mire; his army defeated, he fled afoot with others, only to be overtaken by the victors. Entering a supposedly hospitable tent, he hid himself and fell asleep. His hostess improved the opportunity and drove a tent-pin through his temple. The act has been denounced as a breach of hospitality by some, but has been defended on the grounds that the custom still of the Arabs of Palestine is that any man intruding into a woman's tent is worthy of death. Anyway, let us remember that Jael was not a Christian woman, not begotten of the holy Spirit, not taught in the school of Christ and that, therefore, whatever may be said of her would have no bearing whatever in respect to Christians who are under the law of the Spirit of Christ—the law of love.

Incidentally, let us remember that none of the Jews stood in the same relationship to God and his divine purpose that true Christians occupy. Their warfare in the flesh typifies our warfare as new creatures against the weaknesses and appetites of our flesh. Let us remember also that the death of Sisera and his army did not precipitate them into a hell of eternal tortures, but merely was the passage-way by which they were "gathered to their fathers"—"slept with their fathers." They have known nothing since, and will know nothing in the future until the time of their awakening; and that awakening God has graciously timed so that it will be after Messiah shall have taken possession of the world, and by the establishment of his kingdom shall have overthrown the kingdom of Satan and the reign of sin and death.

Sisera and his army will come forth, like the remainder of mankind, as a result of the redemptive work of Jesus, finished at Calvary. They will come forth in order that the grace of God may be testified to them, and that they may have an opportunity, by obedience to the laws of the kingdom, to prepare themselves to enter into everlasting life on the plane of human perfection in an earthly paradise. With this thought before us, it makes little matter whether death comes upon us through war, pestilence or disease. Only those who have heard of Christ, who have accepted him and who have been begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures—only these are on trial at the present time. The trial of all the remainder of the world is future; for knowledge is an essential feature of testing for life eternal or death eternal.

"A thousand years! earth's coming glory!
'Tis the glad day so long foretold;
'Tis the bright morn of Zion's glory,
Prophets foresaw in times of old."

GIDEON—THE MAN OF COURAGE

JANUARY 17.—JUDGES 6:11-40.

A LOGICAL MAN—A STRONG CHARACTER—TOO HUMBLE FOR SELF-CONFIDENCE—FAITH AFTER PROOF—HOSPITALITY REWARDED—DARING AND DOING FOR GOD—FAITH GROWING SEEKS FRESH PROOFS.

"Blessed is the man whom Thou chooseth."—Psalm 65:4.

Although the Scriptures tell us that not many great, rich, wise and strong are chosen of the Lord for his work, we may be sure that this is not because they would be unacceptable, but because their wisdom, riches, strength, courage, usually make them too self-confident and not sufficiently reliant on the Lord—not sufficiently humble to be taught of him and to be glad of opportunities for his service. It was to Gideon, a stalwart young Israelite, that the angel of the Lord was sent with a message and with a work. His salutation was, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Gideon replied with excellent logic, "Why, if the Lord be with us, hath all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles of which our fathers told us?"

The Midianites and others of the nomadic peoples from the East, discerning that the land of Canaan was very fertile, repeatedly invaded it, confiscating much of the product of the land, so that on this very occasion Gideon was threshing out a few sheaves of wheat, fearing to have a customary threshing lest the Midianites should rob them of all their possessions and increase their levy.

The angel was not there to discuss theology, but to inspire Gideon and to make of him a messenger of the Lord in the deliverance of his people. The humility of the man shines out in his protest that his family was one of the poorest of the tribe of Manasseh, and that he himself was inferior to his brethren of his own father's house. Surely a mistake had been made in the selection, and a more capable person should be found! But to this the angel of the Lord replied, "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man."

When we remember the Lord's promise to Israel that he would defend them and protect their interests—when we remember that their interests were earthly interests—then we should remember also that this protection was dependent upon Israel's maintenance of heart-loyalty and faithfulness to God. In the same covenant the Lord assured the people in advance that if they would wander away into idolatry he would bring upon them various adversities—that their enemies should reap their harvests, etc. Thus we may know the answer to Gideon's question of why the Lord allowed the distress in which they were. It was not that God was unfaithful to his covenant, but that the Israelites had been unfaithful.

A proof of this unfaithfulness is found in our lesson and its context. Gideon's father had the charge or was caretaker of the groves of Baal and Ashtaroth. Their images were near his home—apparently on his property. These groves were large posts, significant of honor, erected near the idol; and these were maintained by the people of Gideon's own time, his own father being one of the principal of them. Here was the secret of Israel's helplessness and subjection to the Midianites.

Although Gideon apparently did not surely know who was his visitor, nevertheless something in the conversation persuaded him that he had an honorable guest. He prepared him a feast, and brought it to him. Instead of eating it the angel directed that the soup be poured out on a rock round about the food, and then touched the cakes and the lamb with his staff. A miracle followed which demonstrated that the visitor was the angel of the Lord—fire proceeded from the rock and entirely consumed the food, which was accepted as a sacrifice. Immediately the angel vanished from Gideon's sight; for he had accomplished the purpose of his mission.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS

Here we have another illustration of the fact that we are surrounded by spirit beings, invisible to our natural eyes, and the fact also that in God's providence in olden times he communicated to mankind through these angels, of whom we read,

"The angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear him, and delivereth them." And again, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation?" Doubtless the angels of the Lord are as present with his people as ever—indeed more so during this Gospel age since Pentecost than ever before, because now God's people are the Spirit-begotten ones specially precious in their Father's sight.—Psalm 34:7; Hebrews 1:14.

"Their angels do always have access to the Father," was the comment of the Lord Jesus respecting his followers. It is a part of their business to look after the interests of the consecrated members of the body of Christ and to deliver them from everything that would not be for their advantage, in harmony with the assurance that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God." But it is the interest, the good, of the new creature that is being considered and not the interests of the flesh. These messengers, no less powerful, are invisible throughout the Gospel age because the Lord would have the members of the house of sons walk by faith and not by sight.—2 Corinthians 5:7.

In olden times, however, in the time of the house of servants, the Lord's representatives assumed human bodies and ordinarily appeared in connection with their visits to humanity, so that they might have the better opportunity of direct conversation and instruction when communicating their messages. Thus the angels of the Lord appeared to Abraham and ate with him. He knew them not until subsequently they revealed their identity.

GIDEON'S GREAT COURAGE MANIFESTED

The same night following the visit of the angel, the Lord made a further revelation to Gideon, instructing him to destroy the idols upon the property and to overthrow the altar of Baal and to build instead an altar to Jehovah, to kill one of his father's bullocks and therewith to make burnt offerings unto the Lord, using for the purpose the wooden pole, or "grove," which formerly did honor to Baal. The work was accomplished in the night because his father, his brethren and the men of the village would have stoutly resisted the work, had they known of it. Gideon, therefore, was very courageous when once he knew that he had been called of the Lord to do the work.

Indeed, we may say that conviction that our work is of divine authority is a power of itself in the heart of any man or woman. This is part of the lack of today—lack of faith in God, and failure to recognize a mission that is of God. Much of the preaching, praying and good endeavors is therefore formalistic, "having a form of godliness without its power." From such we turn away, as St. Paul directed. We are seeking to be God's servants and we want surely to know the divine Word. Armed with it, "one may chase a thousand."

A young Hebrew pursuing his course at Harvard University said, "I have a talent for music and am pursuing it; but, oh, I feel as though I want to find some great object worthy of my life and give my life for that object." Undoubtedly there is such a sentiment in many of the young, especially between the years of twelve to twenty. Happy are the youth who, in God's providences come under wise, helpful instruction, that they might realize that the grandest use of life possible is to render it to God in his service and in the service of humanity! Gideon was one of this type, as is manifest all through the story. He had the courage and the faith, and merely needed to have the knowledge of God and to be commissioned to go forth in his name to do his will.

When the villagers found what had happened and traced it to Gideon they called upon his father to deliver him up to death, but the latter wisely responded as to whether or not a god of mighty power would need to be defended. If Baal could not defend himself he could not defend Israel. The argument was potent. The people were prepared to look for a better God as their deliverer. Meantime, in harmony with his commission, while the Midianites were gathering, Gideon sent messengers to the various tribes, with the result that thirty thousand volunteers responded to give battle to the invaders.

But meantime, also, Gideon required fresh evidences of the Lord that he was doing the divine will. The one test was that a wool fleece laid out in the open over night might be thoroughly wet with the dew, while the ground all about it might be dry. The Lord responded and granted the proof; for Gideon wrung from the fleece a bowl of water. But this was not enough. Who could tell but what there was some special attraction for the fleece in the water? He would reverse the test and ask God to grant a demonstration that all around the fleece might be perfectly wet with dew and that the fleece might be dry. This was also granted.

But we are not to think that because the Lord thus granted proofs to Gideon it would be proper for us today to make similar tests. We have much advantage every way. Behind us are the experiences of Gideon and others for now thousands of years—added to which we have the New Testament records of God's favor toward mankind and the Lord Jesus. We have the "wonderful words of life" and an introduction to the Heavenly Father through the begetting of the holy Spirit as a result of faith in the precious blood. Ours is a different case. The Lord would have us walk by faith in the lessons already taught us, and not by sights and signs of our own time.

GIDEON'S BRAVE THREE HUNDRED

JANUARY 24.—JUDGES 7:1-8, 16-23.

A LITTLE ARMY TOO LARGE—"THINE BE THE GLORY"—COWARDS OFF FOR HOME—COWARD'S SPRING—STILL TOO MANY—WHY THE LAPPERS WERE CHOSEN—"DO AS I DO"—PITCHER, LAMP, TRUMPET—JEHOVAH AND GIDEON—THE VICTORY—THE INCIDENT A PARABLE—ITS MEANING.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts."—Zechariah 4:6.

Today's study reminds of the victory of the Spartan three hundred over the Persian hosts, except that in this case the battle depended, not upon human bravery, but upon the Lord's blessing. Our last study showed us Gideon, encouraged by the Lord's promise of victory, sending messengers to the various tribes in Israel. Today's study shows the resultant army of 32,000 with Gideon at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at Harod Spring—a little lake which drains off eastward to the Jordan. On the farther side of the lake were the Midianites, numbering about 135,000. An invading host, they had for some time been pillaging the Israelites unmolestedly; but now they learned that Gideon's army was gathering; and they assembled themselves to crush it.

While Gideon was feeling that his army was far too small for such a battle—one to four—the Lord directed him to the contrary—that the army was too large, and that there would be danger that the victory he purposed should come might not be appreciated as being from the Lord, but be thought to indicate the dexterity of Israel's warriors. Accordingly, by divine direction, Gideon gave word to his army of 32,000 that as many of them as were fearful and preferred to return home might do so. Many were fearful—22,000. The name of the spring, Harod, signifies coward; and it has been assumed that the name was given it because of the fear manifested by the 22,000 who went home.

Surely the faith of Gideon was tried as his little army melted to 10,000 men! But the Lord said to him, There are yet too many. Cause the host to go down to the spring to drink; and discern between those who drink directly from the pool, kneeling down and putting their mouths into the water and sucking it up, and those who, bending over, lap from their hands as a dog laps with his tongue.

There were three hundred of this latter class left by this test; and the Lord declared these to be the proper ones to especially win the victory. The remaining 9,700, however, would later join in the pursuit of the enemy.

The custom of lapping water with the hand is still common with the people of Palestine—shepherds, etc. They became very expert at it. Symbolically, this act would seem to signify alertness and obedience. An ox drinks by putting his mouth into the water and sucking it and, when thirsty, gives his entire attention to the sucking of the water, refusing to pay any attention to the commands of his owner, and even resisting the use of the rod upon his flanks. The dog, on the contrary, while lapping the water with his tongue, is all alert, with his eyes watching in every direction, seeing everything about him, and ready to quit the water at any moment in pursuit of obedience to duty.

If water here, as elsewhere in the Bible, be understood to represent the truth, these two companies of Gideon's army would represent two classes who love and appreciate the truth. Both classes drink of the water of truth, but the one class more for their own satisfaction. The other class, watchful, attentive, drink according to their needs, and do not neglect alertness in the Master's service, keeping eyes and ears open for the guidance of divine providence at all times. This latter, wiser

class are represented by the three hundred who were with Gideon, himself representing Jesus, the Captain of our salvation.

THE VICTORY AT ARMAGEDDON

Armies in olden times evidently did not keep so strict a watch as do modern armies. At all events, Gideon and a trusted companion were able to penetrate in the darkness of the night amongst the tents of the Midianites. Listening, they heard one relate his dream of how a barley loaf rolled down a hill and did havoc. Another offered the interpretation that this was Gideon and his small army, which was likely to be their undoing. The incident shows that the Midianites were fearful, apprehensive. Gideon was confident; his faith was strengthened by this little experience which the Lord permitted him to have.

About midnight, shortly after the hour of the changing of the guards amongst the Midianites, was the time appointed for Gideon's attack. The method of warfare was novel. The three hundred were divided into three companies, and spread out over a considerable space near the Midianites. In addition to their usual armor, sword, etc., Gideon and his three hundred had new weapons. Each in his left hand had a pitcher of earthenware, each pitcher had in it a lamp; and each soldier had in his other hand a ram's horn trumpet. The instructions to the three separated bands were that those who were immediately with Gideon should do as he did; and that the other bands, hearing should imitate, breaking the front of their pitchers to let the light shine out ahead, shouting aloud, "Jehovah and Gideon," and blowing in the ram's horns.

The Midianites, waking out of sleep, beholding the flashing lights, hearing the clash of the pottery like the sound of armor, hearing the shouting of voices and the blowing of trumpets, imagined themselves being surrounded by a great host; and half-dazed, they fled. They fought each other, mistaking each other for foes. Gideon and his three hundred pursued and were soon in the fight, assisted by the remaining 9,700. The victory was a great one. The Lord was recognized to be the deliverer; and Gideon, his servant, was honored accordingly.

SOME LESSONS FOR TODAY

Referring to Old Testament matters the Apostle declares, "These things were written aforetime for our instruction." (Romans 15:4) In addition to the lessons learned at that time the Lord, through some of these experiences of the past, gives certain spiritual lessons to spiritual Israel. Gideon's call resembles the Gospel call for volunteers on the side of righteousness—of right against wrong, truth against error.

Many in the world hear the message, have sympathy with it and respond, purposing to become soldiers of Christ; but before they are fully accepted, the voice of Jesus calls to them, saying, Sit down and count the cost; it is better not to put your hand to the plow and become a servant of the Lord than afterward to look back and wish that you had not become one.

The sight of the enemy, the "fear of death" (Hebrews 2:15), causes them to walk not with the Master, because it is too much. When they first responded to the call, they thought of the glory and honor, but overlooked the fact that these could be obtained only at the cost of hardship and endurance. These cowards who turn back, and never really take the vow of consecration, are perhaps no worse off than if they had never responded. But they will not share in the great victory—the laurels will not be theirs; the crown of life will not be their portion.

Then comes the second test—that of obedience and loyalty. One class of the Lord's people, like the faithful dog, put obedience to the Master's voice first, alert to do his will. Another portion of the Lord's consecrated people heed less the Master's voice, and even the rod; and being less alert to the service of the Lord, they are less used of him.

Compared to the world, the most alert ones are but as very few. It is those of the Lord's people who are alert that he chooses and grants the greatest opportunities for service. These are the ones most willing to break the earthen vessel—to use their present earthly lives in the service of the Lord—that the light of truth may shine out, and that the cause of truth may have a victory. These zealous ones are most faithful in blowing upon the trumpet, representive of God's Word. These have the blessed opportunity for letting their light shine. Their zeal entitles them to special privileges and opportunities.

The victory of the Lord is attained by the antitypical Gideon and his little band of faithful followers, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." The Lord's Spirit is represented by the light of the lamp shining from the broken vessel. The broken vessels of Gideon's host represent how the Lord's people present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, in his service—in letting the light shine out—in fighting a good fight against the hosts of sin.

We are doubtless near the time when the great victory, the antitype of Gideon's, will be accomplished, when the hosts of sin, the powers of evil, will fall upon one another for their mutual destruction. The present war amongst the nations of Europe is the beginning of this, but not its end. According to the Bible, the climax will be a temporary reign of anarchy, which will fully prepare the world for Messiah's glorious reign of righteousness.

1915—OUR YEAR TEXT—1915

We have chosen as a text for the year the Master's words just before his crucifixion to two of his dear disciples, who had asked to sit with him in his throne. We have selected the Master's reply as the text for this year: "Are ye able to drink of my cup?"—Matthew 20:20-23.

Who knows what this year may bring forth! Who knows but that there may be some special trial, cup of suffering or ignominy, for the loyal followers of the Lamb during 1915! It seems well that we should have this text especially before our minds, "Are ye able to drink of my cup?" Let us answer as did the two disciples on that occasion, "We are able." This was not a boast on their part. It was merely a declaration of their full decision that, whatever circumstances or conditions might arise, they had no thought of any other course than that of obedience to the Lord and of following in his footsteps.

Let us make such a decision promptly. Let us think of it daily. Let us remember, too, that to all those who made such a prompt decision of their determination to drink of his cup, the Lord gave the same assurance that he gave to those two disciples; namely, "Ye shall drink of my cup." We are glad of the assurance that we shall drink of the Lord's cup, because we know that only those who drink of his cup will share with him in the glories of the future, because we know that those who drink of his cup are especially loved of the Father, because we delight to do the will of our Father and to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus.

We have some little cards illustrative of this year's text. We had hoped for them in time for the holidays, but our printing was delayed. We shall be glad to send one of these cards to each regular attendant of the different classes of the I. B. S. A., upon application of the class secretary, or to any other WATCH TOWER subscriber living in a place where there is no class. You will please receive them as little souvenirs from the Society. The card has a medallion head of the Savior—a beautiful one, embossed. Around the edges is shown a grape vine, bearing large bunches of grapes, representing the fruitage of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the church and primarily from the Lord who declares, "I am the Vine; ye are the branches." At the bottom of the card is a very fine reproduction of the Last Supper. On the card are the words of our text for the year, "Are ye able to drink of my cup?"

The medallion picture of our Lord is an extraordinary one—admittedly one of the finest. The legend respecting it is interesting. It is the reproduction of an intaglio cut in an emerald. It purports to have come from the Roman Governor of Judea to the Roman Caesar, and was found amongst the valuables of the Caesars at the time of the fall of Constantinople, which for some time was the seat of government. It was presented to the Pope and is now amongst the treasures of the Vatican. A finely painted copy of this in a gilt frame was presented to us, and this picture and the frame have been reproduced on the card for the comfort and refreshment of you all. It is our desire that one copy of it should be in the hands of each WATCH TOWER subscriber; hence the above suggestion as to how you can best procure it.

On the reverse side of this card we have printed "Our Morning Resolve." Quite a good many have expressed their appreciation of this little resolve and have assured us that it brought them a blessing—greater contentment of heart—greater resignation to the divine will—greater joy in the Lord. We trust that having it on these cards may induce many of THE WATCH TOWER readers to make this resolve their own and thus to share in this blessing. "The blessing of the Lord maketh rich."

THE LIFE PROMISED TO THE CHURCH

"This is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life."—1 John 2:25.

From the standpoint of Christian thought in general, the words of our text would be practically meaningless; for the great majority of people believe that everlasting conditions are forced upon all humanity from the moment of birth, and that all must live forever somewhere. Therefore they argue that whoever does not merit heaven must, at death, of necessity go to a hell of eternal torment. This erroneous conclusion is based upon the assumption that every human being possesses everlasting life and cannot possibly rid himself of it, even if he tried. We are born, they declare, with a deathless nature, and whoever comes into being must continue to live somewhere to all eternity.

The Scriptures, however, teach to the contrary. They declare that no one can have life except as God gives it to him. When God created man, he gave our first parents perfection of life and organism. Then he informed them that they might have that life forever if they would obey his laws; but that if they were disobedient he would put upon them the penalty of sin—death; that as soon as they had transgressed, the sentence, or curse, of death would go into effect—"Dying, thou shalt die." They disobeyed, and the penalty came upon them.

After nine hundred and thirty years of dying, Adam was dead. During all that period the penalty was coming upon him gradually. Daily he was dying, until finally he ceased to breathe. We see that the children of Adam could not share his perfect life; for he had lost it before any of them came into the world. Thus the world has been misshapen in sin and iniquity—a dying race.

NO LIFE EXCEPT THROUGH CHRIST

The Scriptures tell us that there would have been no future life for the human family had it not been for God's provision in Christ. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish" —lose life altogether. Even before God sent our first parents forth from Eden, he promised that eventually there would be a redeemer. The seed of the woman would at some future time bruise the serpent's head.

Although death reigned from Adam to Moses, nevertheless there was a hope held out to mankind that one day the curse would be removed. This hope was transmitted through the family of Seth, afterwards through the family of Noah, and later through Abraham and his posterity, the children of Israel. This hope was merely a suggestion; no definite revelation was made respecting God's purposes. True, the Prophet Enoch, the seventh from Adam through the line of Seth, had prophesied, "Behold the Lord cometh with myriads of his saints, to execute judgment upon all," and thus had intimated that one day righteousness would be established in the earth. Even the promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," was not a clear, positive statement of everlasting life, although it implied a resurrection from the dead.

When the Israelites found that they could not gain life everlasting by keeping the law of God, the Lord promised to send them a deliverer, who would take away their stony heart and make a New Covenant with them. Their experience under the Law Covenant taught them that nothing they could themselves do would deliver them from the power of sin and death. Messiah would be their Deliverer.—Romans 11:26.

THE IMPORT OF JESUS' TEACHINGS

When Jesus came, he brought the words of eternal life, everlasting life. As St. Paul declares, Jesus Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (2 Timothy 1:10) The fact that our Savior brought these to light demonstrates that they were not seen before. Although there had been an intimation of God's plan given to Abraham, yet everything looked contrary to this. The death penalty which God had pronounced in Eden seemed to preclude all hope of life everlasting. Although God had stated more or less vaguely that he would one day deliver humanity from the curse of sin and death, no one could tell how this could be—how God could remit the death penalty and still be just.

But when Jesus came, he brought the whole subject to light. He showed that his redemptive work, provided by God's gracious arrangement, would eventually give life everlasting to all who would accept of it upon the divine terms. He also brought immortality to light. He revealed the fact that God purposes not only to give the world of mankind life everlasting, but to give the faithful followers in Jesus' footsteps a higher kind of life—immortality. Thus a new thought was brought out—one never even dreamed of before.

Our Lord's statements respecting life everlasting and immortality are not so clear as are the statements made by his apostles. We recall that these apostles were promised that they should be especially guided in their utterances. Whatsoever they would bind on earth would be binding and obligatory in the sight of God; and whatsoever they would loose would not be considered binding in God's sight. But in what our Lord Jesus said there was a basis for all that the apostles said and taught.

There was a reason why Jesus did not clearly specify things in respect to himself. This he declared when he said to his disciples, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." To have attempted to tell them all about the glory, honor and immortality to which the church was being called would have been to give them more than they could have borne. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God—the deep things. Hence it was best for our Lord to leave those deep spiritual subjects. After Pentecost the spirit-begotten would be enabled to understand.—John 16:12-14.

HOPE FOR THE WORLD

The whole subject matter of Jesus' teachings was the everlasting life. He had come for the very purpose of giving his life a ransom for many, that men might have restored to them the favor originally enjoyed. The Scriptures nowhere teach that all have life inherently; on the contrary, they teach the very reverse. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

The promise mentioned in our text we understand to refer particularly to the message brought by our Lord Jesus: "Which salvation began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Hebrews 2:3) When Jesus came, he threw light upon the entire subject of God's plan for human salvation from sin and death. He showed that there was to be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust—of those in a justified condition and of those not justified. He would raise them up at the last day, at the beginning of the great seventh day of a thousand years, during which his Messianic kingdom would prevail and the blessing would be world-wide. As the long-promised seed of Abraham, he and his church would bless all the families of the earth.

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES OF THE CHURCH

Our text refers to a certain class only. It does not include the world. "This is the promise which he hath promised us." (1 John 2:25) The promise is now to the church, and to no others. All the promises for the world are made along the line of general principles. All the world are to be blessed, and the blessing that will come to them is an opportunity to gain life everlasting. God made everything dependent upon the Son: "He that hath the Son hath life"—no others. So only believers can have life now—and these not in the complete sense—only the beginning of that life which will be perfected in the resurrection. The world have no life in them, and cannot have it, except under God's arrangement.

Those who now come to Christ are the church, the bride class, and are an especially privileged class. They come into the life that is incorruptible. But there is a promise for the world, and only believers know about this provision for mankind. All shall have opportunity for attaining everlasting life. God has provided a trial day, a judgment day, to demonstrate whether, when mankind shall have been brought to a knowledge of the truth, they will accept his terms and thus attain everlasting life.

The Lord will make it quite possible for the world to gain life everlasting on the human plane, just as he is now making it possible for the church to attain life on the divine plane. The thing for the consecrated people of God to do, then, is to strive to be of the "us" class. This term applies to those who become disciples, those who believe in the kingdom glory and honor offered them, and who, so believing, devote their lives to walking in the footsteps of Jesus, even unto death.

This "us" class includes not only the antitypical Priests, but also the antitypical Levites. But while both classes will have eternal life, everlasting life, "the crown of life" (immortality) is only for those who will prove themselves to be "more than conquerors." The Scriptures hold out a special promise to all who will walk carefully in the footsteps of Jesus. This class are promised joint-heirship with him, the privilege of sitting with him in his throne.—Revelation 3:21.

On one occasion our Lord said to the Jews, "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (John 5:26) In this statement, doubtless, he touched upon the subject of immortality. As the Father has inherent life, so he gave to the Son to have this life; and as the Son hath the promise of this life during his earthly ministry, so he had the actuality of it in his resurrection. This same

promise is given to the church which is his body.—John 10:27, 28.

On another occasion he said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6:53) This would be inherent life—life in themselves. The difference between this life and ordinary life is that the former is inherent, and the latter maintained. All the angels have a life not forfeited, an eternal, everlasting life. It can cease if God so choose, but it is not a life that has a terminating period. We do not know how the angels are supplied with life, but the fact that the Scriptures declare that some of them will die is a proof that they do not possess immortality.

A WORD OF CAUTION

We should be very careful in our use of language. If we were to say to the majority of people that we believe that only the elect church will have immortality, they would misunderstand us altogether—they would misunderstand us to mean that all the remainder of humanity were to perish like brute beasts. Therefore we should be sure that we make the thought clearly understood. Everlasting life is a life that needs to be sustained; immortality is that divine degree of life that needs not to be sustained.

Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) It was life that Adam lost. That life was everlasting in the sense that it might have lasted forever. It was not a life granted for a fixed period—a year or even a million of years—but was to last so long as it was not forfeited. In this Scripture our Lord refers to two classes—the obedient of the world, who will have sustained life everlastingly, and the church, who with Jesus will share the divine nature will have life "more abundant" in the sense that it will be inherent life, not requiring to be sustained.

This is the promise, then, which he has promised us. If we would make our calling and election sure to glory, honor and immortality, we must exercise great carefulness indeed. Those who attain the prize will get the grandest blessing God has to give. All should understand that we have something to do in realizing the gracious promises of God to us. While God is both able and willing to perform his part of the contract, yet we must make sure that we co-operate in every reasonable way.

"And can we hope to gain, dear Lord, such wondrous bliss—
To dwell with thee in light ineffable?
Oh, can we e'er attain such joy as this—
The life immortal, incorruptible?
Ah, yes! for thou hast promised, and thy Word is sure,
And thus inspired we press along the way;
The path is lonely, but the end is sweet,
And openeth into realms of perfect day."

INTERESTING LETTERS

MORE ABOUT LONDON DRAMA EXHIBITIONS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Greetings and love in our Redeemer! The interest in connection with the PHOTO-DRAMA at the London Opera House continues, so that a further fifteen-days' exhibition has been arranged for. The enclosed card gives the figures to date.

This is proving by far the most economical exhibition held in London. Owing to the great interest in the DRAMA we have no need to spend a penny on advertisements for the repetition; we issue a plentiful supply of tickets, and leave the people themselves to do the canvassing, and they are glad to do it. The electrical equipment belongs to the House, so we have no charges on that account; the profit on the sale of Scenarios pays for the electric current, and we have only the rent to find; on this last occasion even this was provided by one of the audience. Brother Tharratt, who is acting as floor manager, had an envelope put into his hand by one of the crowd passing—a perfect stranger to him. To his joy when he opened the envelope, he found twenty £5 notes ($500.00), which is just the amount required for rent for a further fortnight's presentation.

You can well understand, dear Brother, how our hearts rejoice in this manifestation of the Lord's approval. It is heartening to see with what eagerness the crowds press forward to their seats and listen intently to the message from the Lord; they show further appreciation of the DRAMA by frequent applause. We wish the house were larger that all might be enabled to find accommodation; night after night we are packed out, and great numbers are turned away.

It is surely a foretaste of how the "pure language" will be sought after by and by, and indicates how the great work of restitution will be accomplished in the comparatively short space of time.

We think of you, dear Brother, and often wish you were here to see for yourself something of the wonderful results of your noble service for the Lord and his precious truth. How London would delight to see you at this time!

Desiring for you, and all the loved ones with you, a continuance of the Lord's blessing,

Your brother and servant, H. J. SHEARN,
Supt. of DRAMA for London.

DRAMA PROSPERING IN SWITZERLAND

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Concerning the DRAMA work in German Switzerland, I can give you good news; since I wrote last, we had very good exhibitions in Zurich, Basle and St. Gall. Altogether 40,000 visitors and 60 exhibitions at the expense of 50 francs [about $12] per exhibition, rent and everything else included. In all these places, we found remarkable interest, and a large number of letters of appreciation came in, which I turn over to you, dear Brother, as the author of the DRAMA. We got over 3,000 addresses of such ones, who express a special interest in present truth, and we are anxious to lead them on further. All this keeps me exceedingly busy, and therefore I hardly find time for correspondence. I lecture nearly every night and Sundays two or three times publicly and always crowded halls. Present conditions have very much to do with it, as people are wakening up. We sell much literature, but there are many who cannot even afford to pay ten or twenty cents for a booklet or a volume. To these we loan one after another, in order that no one who has interest is hindered from getting the truth.

As we are nearing Christmas and a new political year, we naturally ask ourselves: Will it be the last one? The Lord alone knows, and we are glad to wait patiently this side of the veil till he calls us thither by such or other means. Our times are in his hands, and he cares well for us. What can we ask more? His name be blessed!

The many difficulties are growing fast, and people begin to become more and more afraid about the things to come. It seems hard to believe that the church should gain more influence yet over the state. Everything we hear goes to the contrary, and shows how little influence the church really has today. In Germany and German Switzerland most of the pious people say, "If Germany loses the war, then we will not believe any longer in the existence of a living God. It would prove that there is no such Being, for Germany fights for a just cause."

On this occasion I transfer to you, dear Brother Russell, the heartiest Christmas and New Year wishes from Sr. Lanz, myself and children and all the dear friends over here, who do not forget to thank the Lord every day more for the blessed truth we got by your mediation. May the Lord be your great reward, and help us all to become partakers of his blessed kingdom, which ere long will be established.

With much brotherly love, I remain,

Your servant in the Lord,
EMIL LANZ, Bern (Switzerland).

SAYS COLOSSAL THANKSGIVING IS DUE

DEAR MR. SHEARN of the London, Eng., I. B. S. A. Drama:—

I feel constrained to write you to indicate in some way my intense thankfulness, first to God, and after him to Pastor Russell, yourself, and the I. B. S. A., for the great blessing of the last month.

As yet, I am a trifle bewildered by the magnitude of the outlook. In all modesty and reverence, I feel as though the Almighty had taken me into his confidence and solved problem after problem that I had always thought insoluble. Often I have tried to read and understand the Bible (both Testaments), and the statements have appeared involved, incoherent, and unintelligible. Now it would seem impossible to misunderstand; the whole Book seems to blaze with information.

Formerly I had just grasped a point here and another there; but there was no connection between the points, and I had come to the conclusion that—in any case, at any rate—the connections could not be made during life.

I feel devoutly thankful for one thing, though, which now—in this fuller knowledge—would be impossible; and that is, I am thankful that I had fully made up my mind to pay God the only compliment possible in my so-recently unenlightened state—to trust him and to believe that he was infinitely better than his ordinary servants made him out to be.

Then came the PHOTO DRAMA, and my chat with you the last thing Saturday, and your explanatory lectures Sunday.

What pleases me most is that I had trusted God while in the dark; for to doubt now is a sheer impossibility.

This letter is therefore an attempt to put in words the feeling of a colossal thanksgiving due to the teaching of the I. B. S. A. and the direct blessing of God in leading me to it. I

have never wanted wealth before; but I want it now to help on, to the utmost of my power, the holy work of this real man of God—Pastor Russell. With all best wishes, very faithfully yours,

GEORGE RAWLINSON.—England.

REALIZES THE PROMISED ONE HUNDRED FOLD

MY DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—

In the Master's name, Greetings: I feel constrained to write to you today, because it is the anniversary of a day which marked the opening wide of a door of opportunity to labor effectively in the Lord's service.

Though having been associated with present truth since 1900, it was only three years ago today that, kneeling at my table, I wrote out and signed the vow—a solemn reminder of my personal covenant with the Lord, and sealed it with tears which, like "the cup," were mingled sweet and bitter. Daily my desire has been, "May thy rule come into my heart more and more, and thy will be done in my mortal body"; and whilst praying for you and all at the Bethel Home and everywhere, I have tried to scrutinize more carefully my thoughts, words and actions that I might be of more use to the Lord and his dear people.

So fortified, and encouraged repeatedly by our Father's smile, time passed in joyous service, and then that beautiful resolve you commended to us appeared in THE TOWER. There was no waiting this time. My heart leaped to take advantage of this further fortification, and as I took up "The daily round, the common task," I said, "I will, this day, as a saint of God, fulfil my vows, continuing the work of sacrificing the flesh and its interests," and I tried to be humble, gentle and true to all; and then, when the anxieties pressed sore, and my "old man," naturally a mutterer, was tempting me to worry and fret, I remembered the closing lines and sought God's grace to "Repel all anxiety, all discontent, all discouragement."

I can now see that before November 11, 1911, I was not in an attitude which invited the utmost blessing from the Lord, but since that time I have realized the promised one hundredfold in this present life, and now look forward with full assurance of faith to that deliverance which soon shall swallow up our present hopes in wondrous realization.

May the Lord bless thee, dear Pastor. I thank him continually for your able and faithful ministry, and esteem very highly the privilege of association with you in the dissemination of the harvest message, particularly in these closing days, when we have the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION.

Your brother by his grace, H. C. THACKWAY.

CREATION DRAMA ITEMS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

At Dothan, Ala., a Jewish merchant said to one of the brethren there, "My son was out to see your pictures last night (Part 3), and he says he loves Jesus now."

At Pell City, Ala., a holiness revival meeting was in progress, and they had been praying that the Lord would close up the motion-picture house which had started recently—the only one in town. The revivalist lost his congregation when the PHOTA-DRAMA OF CREATION was opened up, so he closed his meeting and came, too. This incident ought to appeal to the owners of motion-picture houses.

One lady came out at the close of Part 3 and said, "I have been a Christian and read my Bible for many years, but I never loved the Lord Jesus as much as I do tonight."

At Cairo, Ga., the ministers decided to fight us, and one of them, apparently more fair minded than the rest, decided to come and see Part I., so that his opposition might be intelligent. The result was he came to see all the parts and was much impressed.

At Sylacauga, Ala., the electric lights are furnished by water-power, but a continued drought had closed down the electric light plant and, of course, the motion-picture houses, too. So the Opera House was offered to friends at the low rate of $10 for four days. It seemed the $10 was to be wasted, but a day or two before the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain descended, and they had plenty of power for the PHOTO-DRAMA.

I am greatly thankful for the privilege of a part in this phase of the harvest work, and daily pray that I may be kept humble and faithful in the discharge of my privileges to the

Yours in much Christian love, very end. B. H. BARTON.

"BETTER THAN FOUR WEEKS REVIVAL"

DEAR FRIENDS:—

The PHOTO-DRAMA, with its trials and blessings, has come and gone, but I hope it has not been in vain; for it has left its mark here as nothing else has done for a long time back. The trials it brought us were considerable; but the blessings so far outweighed and exceeded the trials that the latter passed into insignificance.

We are truly thankful to you for giving us the opportunity of showing the DRAMA here. And we can never thank and praise our dear Heavenly Father enough for giving us this grand and wonderful privilege of helping in the work of presenting the DRAMA to the people of this town and vicinity. It is truly a marvelous witness for the truth, and we trust that much good has been done here that will bear fruit in God's due time. And we are so glad and thankful that we could have a share in this, that the cost to us has seemed not worth mentioning. I am sure I speak the sentiments of all the class here.

Many are the favorable comments. One man said, "The DRAMA did the town more good than a four weeks revival." Another, "It is the finest thing that ever came to town; bring it again." Another, "It did me more good than anything I ever saw or heard." Many pronounced it the finest thing they had ever seen, even in the books; one of them is an infidel.

I saw the DRAMA at the Clinton, Iowa, Convention, but never realized what a wonderful and powerful witness for truth it is, until it was shown here. It has been such a blessing to me and has filled my heart with such an overflow of joy that I could not contain it all. The joy comes largely from having the privilege of serving it to others.

Yours in the love and service of the Lord. E. M. LANE.—Ia.

GREATEST BLESSING THAT HAS COME INTO HER LIFE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I feel I must write you a note of thanks for the greatest blessing that has come into my life, through the blessed promises of the divine plan of the ages. I feel as though God had taken me into his very presence by giving me a glimpse of the glory of his love.

Last May, when the PHOTO-DRAMA came to Birmingham for a month it was my privilege to see it, and through its influence I was led to purchase the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. I have read and reread with growing delight those precious pages with the Bible at my side.

This has brought sure peace and contentment, answering the "Why?" that has been for years tugging at my heart-strings. How good God is to be so tenderly patient, and how I want to appreciate his love for us and do everything I know to please him!

I realize the time is short, and by his grace am starting in the colporteur service this week, grateful for the honor to be an ambassador for Christ.

I have just learned that a record is kept at the Tabernacle office of those who have sent in their names as having made the vow their own. I recognize it as the deeper significance of my consecration vow, and have reverently asked God to help me make it and keep it my own, desiring that my name be added to the record. By his grace, one of the little ones in Christ.

MRS. EDLENA B. GIBSON.—Ala.

RE ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS

DEAR BROTHER AND PASTOR:—

We have noted the paragraph in November 1st WATCH TOWER re the name "ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS" in place of the one we have been using, "INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION." We can see some reasons why we are not entitled to use the latter name and we think the new one a very good one.

Shall we take down the signs that now appear on the Temple and change our stationery? (The signs over the doors now read, "PEOPLES TEMPLE, LOCAL HEADQUARTERS INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION.")

Trusting we may impose on your valuable time long enough to reply to these queries, and assuring you of our continued love and prayers, we are, THE LOS ANGELES ECCLESIA.

IN REPLY

The words "ASSOCIATED BIBLE STUDENTS" on a religious-notice page of newspapers seems a very good name. We therefore use it in advertising local New York Meetings. This does not mean that we have abandoned the use of the words INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION in connection with all literature, conventions and general affairs. As respects the friends everywhere, if they think it best to continue the use of the name INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION they may do so; but we would like that it be used only as you have used it in Los Angeles; namely, "Local Headquarters (or Local Class) INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION."

THE DRAMA IN MANY TONGUES

The DRAMA is being shown and heard by the Finnish, the Swedish, the Danish, the Norwegians and the Germans. We are hoping to have copies of these records for American use shortly. The Danish records have already arrived. We also have some inquiries for these in Polish, Greek, Spanish and Italian. If the interest seems sufficient to justify it we hope to have a fairly good array of foreign translations of the DRAMA. Interested should address EUREKA DRAMA DEPT., 17 Hicks St.

THE SOUL, NOT THE BODY, BROUGHT FORTH FROM THE TOMB

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust."—Acts 24:15.

When we consider that for centuries people have been accustomed to confusion in respect to the teachings of Scripture, it is natural that the question should be asked, What proof have we that it is not the body that sleeps in death, and that meantime the soul has not passed on to the higher realms? The answer is that in the Word of God we find no suggestion that such is the case. The Bible says nothing about the resurrection of the body, but much about the soul. Repeatedly the Word of God calls death a sleep. Every night the body sleeps, if it is in good condition; and this natural sleep of the body is Scripturally used to illustrate the condition of all who die the Adamic death.

In order to get the matter clear in our minds we must go back to the beginning and see what the soul is. First of all we read in the Genesis account (1:27) that God created man—not man's body, but man. The question then arises, What is man?

We answer, Man is not so much avoirdupois, but an intelligent being, a personality. What God formed out of the dust of the earth was not man, but merely a form, or body, that would be made into man. Then into its nostrils God breathed "the breath of lives"—the Hebrew term signifying the breath or vitality common to all animal beings. It was not a special kind of life different from that which the lower animals have; on the contrary, it was the same kind of life given to fish, fowl and beasts—the power to live.

The same kind of life is carried forward in the human family that is carried forward in beasts. This vitality common to all animal creatures infuses the body and thus energizes it. The difference between man and the lower animals is that while they have the same kind of life man has the superior brain. Man's head is shaped differently; therefore he can think of subjects about which the lower animals cannot think, because he has a better brain. A man with a head of a given shape cannot think with the same breadth of mind as a man with a better shaped head—a man who is less fallen. Some have lost more, others less, of the original perfection, of the original intelligence, given man in his creation.

A CANDLE AS AN ILLUSTRATION

A careful examination of the Genesis account of man's creation reveals the fact that when the breath came into the body which God had formed out of the dust of the ground, the combination produced soul, sentient being, with personality. The body in itself has no personality, the breath of life has no power, no sentient being, but when the two came together, they produced sentient being.

Perhaps the best illustration of the thought is afforded by a candle. The candle is composed of tallow or wax and wick. The flame is produced by an outside power—the spark of fire. When the spark is applied to the wick, the air begins to combine with the wax or the tallow, and the result is light.

Let the candle represent the body, the air represent the breath of life—vitality—and the flame the being, the personality. God alone can strike the match—create the human being. This life which came from God in the beginning was given to Adam upon certain conditions, certain restrictions; namely, it was to continue forever if man remained obedient to God, but if he was disobedient God would take his life from him.

Adam was disobedient, and his soul was sentenced to death. (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) It was not the body that sinned and was sentenced to death, while the soul remained pure. On the contrary, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The sentence of death pronounced upon Adam affected his soul. As it was the spark of life that produced the soul, so the taking away of the spark of life extinguished the soul. To revert to the illustration of the candle: If some one blow upon it, the flame will be extinguished; thus is produced an adverse condition.

But before father Adam died, before the flame of life was fully extinguished, he had imparted the spark of life to his children; and these in turn imparted the spark of life to theirs. Thus the spark of life has been transmitted from generation to generation. In the illustration, if before we say, "I will blow out the light of that candle," it has been used to light other candles, the extinguishing of the flame of the first candle will not affect the others. But the fact that the transmitted spark of life was impaired is evident; for whereas Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years under adverse condition, his children as a rule could not live nearly so long, thirty-three years now being the average life-time.

IN WHAT SENSE THE DEAD SLEEP

Everywhere the Scriptures state that it is the soul that is dying. The question then might arise, If the soul dies, what hope of a future life has mankind? The Bible answers that from the beginning God foreknew all that would happen, and that already in his plan he had made arrangements whereby there would be a resuscitation, a re-quickening, of these human souls that have died. Nothing is beyond his knowledge or his power. Nowhere does he say that there will be a re-quickening of the body, but of the soul.

The Sadducees of Jesus' day did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. When, therefore, they heard that Jesus had said that all in the graves would ultimately hear his voice and come forth, they disputed his statement as foolish. Coming to him with a proposition which they thought would expose the fallacy of his teachings, they said to him, Suppose a woman had seven husbands, all of whom died before she did, whose wife would she be in the resurrection?—Luke 20:27-40.

Jesus replied that they erred because they neither understood the Scriptures nor appreciated the power of the Almighty. He reiterated his statement that there would be a resurrection of the dead, and reminded them that God had so implied in his message to Moses at the burning bush, when he said, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." The Master's argument is that this statement is of itself a proof of the resurrection; for God surely would not refer thus to beings forever blotted out of existence; that God's purpose of a resurrection is fixed, unalterable, and that those whom men call dead "all live unto him"—from God's standpoint they are asleep, and not destroyed. The Word of God therefore speaks of the dead as sleeping.

Throughout the Old Testament we read that different ones were gathered to their fathers or that they slept with their fathers. Did the body sleep? No, it was absolutely dead—returned to the dust from which it was created. What was it, then, that slept? That which slept was that which God recognized as the personality—the soul. The souls of both good and bad slept; for it is written that "there shall be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust."

Abraham's fathers were not saintly men, but heathen. He was called out from amongst his kindred to be a servant of God. When Abraham was gathered to his fathers in death he went to the same place where they were—sheol in the Old Testament, hades in the New—the tomb, the death state. Of all the kings of Israel, good and bad, and of the prophets, we read that they were gathered to their fathers. They are asleep in death.

POINTS NOT USUALLY NOTICED

When Jesus entered the room where the young daughter of Jairus lad dead, he declared, "Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth." He did not say that she was in heaven or in purgatory or in hell. He spoke in the same way about Lazarus, saying, "Lazarus sleepeth." His disciples replied, "If he sleep, he shall do well." They had not understood the Master's words. Finally Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. . . . Nevertheless, let us go unto him." So they went to the tomb where Lazarus was.

When Jesus met Martha and Mary, he did not tell them that Lazarus was in heaven, with a harp in his hands, etc.—nothing of the kind. What he said was, "Thy brother shall rise again;" thy brother shall live again. Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day"—the great day, the seventh thousand-year day, the day of Christ's kingdom, when all the dead will be due to come forth. To encourage her, Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life"—there will be no resurrection except by my power—why not ask me now? But Martha did not get the thought; for Jesus said, "Where have ye laid him?"

Martha and Mary took our Lord to where Lazarus was. When Jesus gave command that the stone he rolled away from the tomb, Martha protested, saying that since her brother had then been dead four days, corruption must have set in. We read that Jesus said, "Lazarus, come forth"—out of the cave where he had been laid. Jesus did not say, Lazarus, come down from heaven, nor did he say, Lazarus, come up from below.—John 11:1-46.

Lazarus was a very dead man; for he had died four days before Jesus came. Yet from the divine standpoint he was asleep, as the Master declared; that is to say, his soul was not destroyed. According to the Scriptures, the soul can be put out of existence. On one occasion our Lord said to his

disciples, "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but ratner fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna"—the second death. —Matthew 10:28.

WHAT CHRIST'S DEATH ACCOMPLISHED

The soul is that individuality which God has decreed shall have an opportunity of coming to a knowledge of everlasting life. All this opportunity is in Christ. As St. Paul says, "For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." (Romans 14:9) He lived as a man, and died that he might thereby have the right to control all those who have gone into the prisonhouse of death. Therefore the Scriptures tell us that there must be a resurrection of the dead.

Our Lord says that all will hear his voice and come forth from the tomb. (John 5:28, 29) In 1 Corinthians 15, St. Paul explains how this can be. He points out that the death of Christ is for all: "As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive—every man in his own order." Then he proceeds to show that the first to come forth will be the church class. He also declares that if there is no resurrection of the dead, our preaching is vain and our hope is gone. He concludes that since Christ is risen from the dead there is therefore an assurance of the resurrection.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

The restoration of the bodies of the billions who have died would be a very absurd proposition. Scientists tell us that the human frame changes once in every seven years; that continually old matter is being replaced with new, so that a man who has reached the age of forty-nine years has had seven bodies during his lifetime. The change of the body did not affect the personality of the man, however. The sloughing off of a hand or a foot or the loss of an eye might have taken place, but the human soul continues; for it is this intelligent human being that has resulted from the union of matter and vitality. God's proposition is the restoration of this soul, this personality. Never does he speak of the resurrection of the body.

The theory of the resurrection of the body has involved theologians in many difficulties. Some years ago a story went the rounds of the newspapers to the effect that the coffin of a man who had been buried at the foot of an apple tree had been unearthed, and the discovery made that the roots of the tree had penetrated the coffin and absorbed the body, and that at these roots there was something resembling a hand, an arm, a human limb, etc. In other words, the tree had been living upon that human body. The apples from that tree had been sold to various persons and shipped in all directions; some had been fed to hogs, etc. Those who hold to the theory of the resurrection of the body would have a knotty problem to solve in trying to fit their theory to these facts.

There is not one statement in the Bible that declares that the same body that dies is to be brought forth in the resurrection. On the contrary we read, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him." He will have no difficulty in making a body; divine power is equal to any emergency. The Sadducees doubted the power of God.

A STUPENDOUS MIRACLE

We admit that to produce a body with the same convolutions of the brain, the same individuality, the same soul, the same sentient being, is a miracle so great that we cannot conceive of it. Yet it is that very thing which God purposes to do for the whole human family—thousands of millions in number.

It is for us to follow the Word of God, to reject all extraneous matter from whatever quarter it may come, and to "receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to make us wise." We are to discard the things which are without Scriptural authority. Nothing that man can offer can compare with what we find in the Word of God; the Bible is the very essence of grandeur, beauty, justice, love.

In Isaiah's prophecy we read that Jesus "poured out his soul unto death," that his soul was made "an offering for sin." (Isaiah 53:12, 10) Then again we read, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in sheol [the grave]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." (Psalm 16:10) Explaining this prophecy, the Apostle Peter says that God would not leave Jesus' soul in hades—the grave. (Acts 2:22-32) The soul of Jesus was not left in the tomb.

Speaking of his own resurrection, Jesus said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen! and have the keys of hell and of death." (Revelation 1:18) God raised him up from the death condition on the third day. On the very morning of his resurrection he said to Mary, "Touch me not; for I have not yet ascended to my Father. . . . I ascend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John 20:17) He was the first one who descended to the tomb, and was raised from the dead, and who has ascended far above angels, principalities, powers, and every name that is named.—Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:9-11.

Since our Lord has passed through these experiences, the Apostle's suggestion is that he who brought the Lord Jesus from the tomb is also to bring us. He tells us that we need not sorrow as do those who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, let us believe that he will bring all that are in the death condition back to life. (1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14) Let us believe that "all who are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth" (John 5:25-29)—the church first. As it is written, "Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the first resurrection; on such the second death shall have no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ; and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Revelation 20:6.

Others shall come forth to a resurrection over whom the second death may have power. Whether or not they will ever get altogether free from death will be determined by their conduct during the time of their opportunity—during the time when the riches of God's grace will be made known to them and when they will have the opportunity of coming back into full harmony with him and of gaining life everlasting.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAMSON

JANUARY 31.—JUDGES 13: 8-16, 24, 25.

SAMSON BORN A NAZARITE—HIS BIRTH FORETOLD—HIS MISSION FORETOLD—THE VALUE OF A MISSION—HOW HE JUDGED ISRAEL—SAMSON'S WEAKNESS—HIS LOYALTY TO GOD—HIS VICTORY IN DEATH.

"Beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink."—Judges 13:4.

All Jews who took a certain vow were styled Nazarites. No one should confound these people with the residents of a certain city called Nazareth. Jesus was a resident of Nazareth, but he was not under the vow of the Nazarite. The vow of a Nazarite was that he would avoid spirituous liquor in every form, and that his hair would not be cut. Samson from his birth was under this vow, which, by the direction of the angel of the Lord, was adopted for him by his parents. In some sense the vow seems to have signified the full, complete consecration of the individual to God and his service.

Twice before Samson's birth, an angel of the Lord communicated with his parents to the intent that the mind of the mother, especially, should be impressed with the importance of abstemiousness; and that thus her child should be born under a favorable endowment. Undoubtedly his parents realized to what extent parents may give mental and physical strength to their children; and they would be alert to endow their offspring favorably.

While the life, the virility, comes from the father, the mother has greatly to do with the stamping of the character. And in the mother's weakened condition prior to the birth of her child, the father could and should realize the situation, and appreciate his privilege of surrounding the mother with fine intellectual and spiritual influences. Thus the father moulds the thoughts of the mother and leads them in profitable directions, while the mother in turn stamps those high, noble aspirations upon her child, that he may be well-born—an honor to his family name, a blessing to his community and, above all, be qualified to be a servant of God.

According to divine promise Samson was to be one of the Judges of Israel; that is to say, one of the deliverers of Israel. The need of deliverance is evident from the context. The Philistines (otherwise the strangers) resided in the southwest of Palestine. They are supposed to have been pirates, and preyed upon the Israelites by land, as travelers are upon the deep. They were a war-like people, and evidently very intelligent as respects manufactures. Their cunning is shown in the fact that they not only disarmed the Israelites, but prohibited their making any iron implements or doing any kind of blacksmithing work. In this manner they held down

the Israelites in a species of peonage, exacting tribute of them.

A great maritime power of our day still more shrewdly practises a similar oppression in India—supplying from her mills and shops implements of labor, while guarding against importation of war materials. Moreover, modern methods of finance brings to her rich revenues without the outwardly rude and crude methods of the Philistines.

Samson's work for his people must not be measured by merely the amount of damage he did to the Philistines in various ways as a warrior and as a strategist—setting fire to their wheat fields by ingeniously using foxes for the purpose, etc. Doubtless his chief work was one of reviving the spirit of his people, who had become thoroughly dejected, hopeless, under the oppression of their enemies. The lesson of what one man could do when he devoted his life to serving his people and in delivering them from their enemies must have been a great stimulus to patriotism, and an encouragement to return to the Lord and to expect divine favor and prosperity as a result.

POINTS TO BE REMEMBERED

We must not forget that the Jews were not Christians, nor that the rules laid down by Jesus and the Apostles for Christians were not applicable to the Jews. Moses and the nation of Israel, according to the Scriptures, were a house of servants. (Hebrews 3:5, 6) They were promised divine blessings in proportion as they would serve faithfully, obediently, the divine law, which did not call upon them to be saints in the Christian sense of that word, applicable to the church of Christ.

Another difference between the Jew and the Christian is that the former was promised temporal blessings as a reward for faithfulness, while the latter is promised spiritual blessings with temporal adversities and trials of faith and patience, love and loyalty. Unless this distinction between the two ages and the two laws be borne in mind, we shall continually be in difficulty.

According to the law, Samson was rated as a very faithful servant of God. His faithfulness consisted in his loyalty to the divine requirements, to the cause of God and to Israel, the covenanted people of God. His faith was continually manifested in all that he did; and his whole life was used in serving his people. Hence he is rated in amongst the ancient worthies by St. Paul, in Hebrews 11:32, when enumerating those who through faith gained victories and had the testimony that they won the divine approval.

In a hundred ways Samson was neither a Christian nor an example to Christians. In many respects he lived after the flesh, notwithstanding his noble self-sacrifice in the service of the Lord. We should remember, however, that he was never begotten of the holy Spirit. Only since Pentecost have any been begotten of the Spirit of the Lord as "new creatures in Christ." True, we read that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Samson; but we are to bear in mind the distinction and the wide difference in the Spirit of the Lord coming upon the prophet and other ancient worthies to move them to do this, that and the other thing for the accomplishment of divine purposes, or to write this, that and the other thing in harmony with the divine will. Such a mechanical operation of the holy Spirit is wholly different from that which applies to the Christian, begotten of the Spirit, during this Gospel age.

We are to receive the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of sonship, the holy Spirit, which, more and more permeating our lives, will make us more and more like unto our Father in heaven. In all these spirit-begotten ones will be exemplified growth in grace, knowledge and love, by their development and manifestation of the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

VICTORY IN DEATH

A woman was Samson's undoing. He confided to her, and she betrayed him. He informed her that he was under a vow which included not only his abstinence from the use of intoxicating liquors, but also that his hair should not be shorn; and that if the vow were broken, his special strength and power would be broken. While he slept, his deceitful friend cut off his hair, and then aroused him, saying, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" But, the vow being broken, he was without the special strength which had made him so wonderful before.

Samson's enemies gloated over him, put his eyes out, and kept him as a slave, grinding at the mills. But at a great feast they brought him forth as a trophy. He stood near two massive pillars which supported the roof of the great building; and with a prayer to God he grasped these and pulled down the entire structure, doing more damage to the Philistines in the killing of their chief men, and more therefore for the deliverance of his people, in that one act than in all the other experiences of his life. Samson's faith in God and desire to do his will are continually manifested throughout his life, when viewed from a proper angle. He "obtained a good report through faith."

LESSONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN

One lesson we may learn from Samson's experiences is the importance of having an object in life. No one can get the best out of his life unless he have some definite purpose before him. Parents should encourage their children not to aspire for things for which they have no capacity, no qualification, but to aspire for the best of what they are capable in life.

"Dare to have a purpose true,
And dare to make it known."

In boys and girls between the ages of twelve and sixteen, there is a surging of the life forces which, rightly directed, tends to make of them noble men and noble women; but which, perverted into wrong directions, may make them vicious; or which, discouraged entirely, may make them do-less. Every parent and every guardian should realize these facts, and shape his dealings with the young under his care accordingly.

Not only so, but there is in youth a striving for nobility, a realization that life is as so much of value, that it can be used but once, and that the direction of its start has much to do with the results. At such a time the faithful parent or guardian may be very successful in setting before the opening mind the reasonable obligation which he has toward the Creator, and the blessed privilege of laying down life itself on the side of right against wrong, on the side of truth against error. With matters thoroughly appreciated, the number of moral heroes in the world would be greatly multiplied.

Another lesson associated is in connection with vows. Vows are voluntary matters. No one is obligated to take a vow; but a vow once taken should be observed faithfully, if its blessings would be enjoyed. We are not advising vows to men or to social or religious institutions, but we do recommend vows to the Lord respecting faithfulness to him and to his cause. But whoever takes a vow should remember that it were better not to take it at all than to violate it; for its violation serves to weaken the conscience, whereas its observance tends to strengthen the entire life and to make the individual the more fit, the more prepared, for the Lord's service here and hereafter. The Lord seeks amongst his people strong characters for efficient service.

"Up, then, and linger not, thou saint of God,
Fling from thy shoulders each impeding load;
Be brave and wise, shake off earth's soil and sin,
That with the Bridegroom thou mayst enter in.
O watch and pray!

"Gird on thy armor; face each weaponed foe;
Deal with the sword of heaven the deadly blow;
Forward, still forward, till the prize divine
Rewards thy zeal, and victory is thine.
Win thou the crown."

KING DAVID'S GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

FEBRUARY 7.—RUTH 1.

A BEAUTIFUL STORY—ISRAEL'S HOME LIFE—BENEATH THE SURFACE—GOOD PEOPLE ASTRAY—NAOMI'S RETURN—RUTH'S CONVERSION—WHAT IT COST HER—WHAT SHE GOT.

"Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."—Ruth 1:16.

It is said that when Benjamin Franklin was American Minister in Paris, he spent an evening with some of its literary people, during which he was called upon to contribute to the entertainment. Drawing from his pocket a manuscript prepared for the occasion, he remarked, "Reading a very ancient book, I came across a very charming bit of literature,

which I believe will prove as interesting to many of you as to myself. I have copied it; and if you will permit, I will read it." It was the story of our lesson—indeed, the entire story of the Book of Ruth. The narrative tells that the audience was delighted and desired to be informed where in ancient history so beautiful and idealistic a tale could be found. They were more than surprised when he told them that he had copied it from the Bible; for France at that time, in its official and literary circles, was agnostic, if not atheistic.

The story of the Book of Ruth gives us a little glimpse into the affairs of the Israelites, showing us that there was a deep spirit of religion underlying the surface of wars and captivities, etc., which naturally most impress themselves upon our attention in every history of every people. The opening was at Bethlehem, "the city of David," where centuries later Jesus was born, "David's Son and David's Lord." The religious sentiment of the family is shown by the import of their names. Elimelech, the husband's name, signifies "My God is King." His wife's name, Naomi, is said to mean "The pleasure of Jehovah." They had two young sons, Mahlon (sickly one) and Chilion (pining one).

It is worth while here for us to learn a lesson to the effect that it is never good policy to sacrifice our religious interests for our temporal interests. With all Christians the motto should be "God First." It will not do to say that perhaps they moved to Moab that they might do a little missionary work; for although the Moabites were the descendants of Lot, and therefore related to the Israelites and had spoken to some extent the same language, nevertheless God's covenant was merely with the descendants of Abraham, and the others were aliens, strangers, foreigners, from the commonwealth of Israel, like all other Gentiles. Nor would it have been proper for them to attempt to convert the Moabites; for God had not called the Mobaites, but merely the Israelites—as we read, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—Amos 3:2.

However, many Christians have made the same mistake that this family made; and if Christians indeed, they were all the more responsible, because the Christian has a higher relationship with God and should have a clearer knowledge of his will and more of the "spirit of a sound mind." It was unwise to take two boys into a heathen land, where they were likely to be contaminated; instead, every reasonable influence should have been thrown about them to preserve their loyalty to Jehovah.

Doubtless Naomi realized all this, as indicated by her words in the lesson, "It grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me." Here again we perceive that the hand of the Lord against her was really in her favor, and that it had a proper influence upon her and brought her back to the Land of Promise.

TWO BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERS

Naomi (the pleasure of Jehovah) must have been a beautiful character. This is evidenced by the deep affection manifested toward her by her two daughters-in-law. They both preferred to join her and to go to her homeland, to leave their own home associations; and they started with her. But as she reflected that they would be strangers in a strange land and would pine for home, even as she was pining now, she tenderly urged them to reconsider—to go back to their home and kindred, their habits and customs, and to remarry, etc.

One of them so concluded, and kissed her good-bye; but the other one, Ruth, broke forth in such eloquent terms that her words have become permanently identified with classic literature:

> "Entreat me not to leave thee,
> And to return from following after thee;
> For whither thou goest, I will go;
> And where thou lodgest, I will lodge;
> Thy people shall be my people,
>
> "And thy God my God:
> Where thou diest I will die,
> And there will I be buried:
> The Lord do so to me, and more also,
> If aught but death part thee and me."

When we say that Ruth was converted, we of course do not mean that she became a Christian or that she became an heir of Christian promises; for there were none such until after Jesus, by his death, opened up the "new and living way" beyond the veil. She was converted to Judaism, and this is a fresh testimony to the faithful living of Naomi.—Verses 16, 17.

THE VALUE OF POSITIVE DECISION

One thing here is worthy of note; namely, the positiveness with which Ruth made her decision. It was not a proposal to try for a time how it would go to live in Judea. It was a decision unto death. In this respect all true conversions are alike. The Christian, for instance, did not really become a Christian until he made just such a definite, positive consecration of himself to leave the world, its affairs, its loves, its hopes and ambitions, and to spend and be spent even unto death in the service of the Lord. The value of positive decision in respect to life we can hardly overestimate. Thousands of lives are blighted because of lack of decision. Positiveness for God is the only condition in which we can hope to "make our calling and election sure."

True to God's promise to the Jewish people, Naomi and Ruth were blessed in their return to the Lord—to his people—to his land of covenant and promise. We are to remember that all the promises to fleshly Israel were earthly, while all those to spiritual Israel are heavenly.

Both the nobility and the wisdom of Naomi's character are manifest in the course which she pursued on arriving in Bethlehem practically penniless, and unable to retrieve the interest of her husband and her sons in their share of the land. She did not beg, nor request Ruth to beg. There was no false cry nor false modesty. Ruth went out, like other poor women, to glean handfuls of grain after the reapers. Under the law it was a part of God's provision for the poor that no one should reap the corners of his field, but should leave these for the poor. Naomi counseled Ruth to go gleaning in the fields of one of her wealthy relatives, named Boaz.

KING DAVID'S GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

As Naomi had surmised, the wealthy Boaz took note of the modest young woman who daily gleaned in his fields; and subsequently he learned that she was a relative through marriage. He pursued the course of the Jewish law, and Ruth became his wife. Obed was the name of their son, Jesse was the name of his son, and David was the youngest of Jesse's sons. Thus Ruth the Gentile became identified with the royal family as an ancestor, and with King David's greatest Son and Lord—Jesus.

The Bible is a very honest Book. It does not disguise the fact that Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, was received into the Jewish nation by marriage and became an ancestor to King David, Solomon and Jesus. It does not disguise the fact that Ruth was by nature a foreigner, a Gentile, and at one time an idolatress. No other book is so honest. Similarly the New Testament, with wonderful candor, tells all the details of how one of his own disciples betrayed the Master, of how all forsook him and fled, of how the subsequently noble St. Peter denied his Master with curses, of how St. Peter and St. John, when preaching in the Temple, were perceived by the people to be ignorant and unlearned.

Similarly the weaknesses and sins of King David and others of the royal family are in no sense covered or disguised. They are all laid bare and reproved, their punishments stated, and the repentance of the culprits noted. We dare trust such honest writers, even as in the history of today we would be willing to trust such writers. Indeed, we do not know of any history today that would compare with the Bible history in candor.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

In these Studies we make no attempt at impassioned appeal; but rather, in the words of Jesus, we suggest that each one, when considering whether or not he will join himself to the Lord, become a follower of Christ, shall first quietly "sit down and count the cost," as the Master directed. We do, however, earnestly urge the importance of decision, and a positive decision, as being essential to proper peace of mind and to proper Christian progress, and to an inheritance with the saints under the terms of this Gospel age.—Colossians 1:12.

Those who do conclude to give their hearts to God should know that "there is no other name given under heaven or amongst men" whereby we can be recovered to God's favor, so as to be permitted to enter the house of sons, than the name of Jesus. In his name means in, by and through all that his name stands for to have faith in God, obedience to his terms, etc. But when the decision is reached, it means, "Thy God shall be my God."

Decision is reached to join the house of sons through Christ. Be it noticed that we have not recommended the joining of any denomination, nor does the Bible. The instruction of the Bible is that each, to be a member of the house of sons, must be joined to the Lord—to Christ, and through him to the Father—in order to be an heir of God and a

joint-heir with Jesus Christ. Such as do this have their names written, not on an earthly roll of membership, but "in the Lamb's Book of Life," "whose names are written in heaven."

Their next step should be to say, "Thy people shall be my people." And so surely as any of God's people are found, they are all brethren of one family, whether they be found amongst Roman Catholics or Baptists, amongst Methodists or Presbyterians, amongst Lutherans or Anglicans, or whether they be found outside of all denominations. God's people are all one, because by one Spirit they are all baptized into the one spiritual body, the Head of which is Christ, whose Spirit must pervade all his members.—1 Corinthians 12:13.

Not only should we seek for the people of God, but we should acknowledge and fellowship them, whether they be white or black, rich or poor, learned or ignorant; for "ye are all one in Christ Jesus," and "One is your Master, even Christ."

The proper course for all those who come into Christ is to inquire for and search out "the old paths"—the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles, their teachings, their practises—and not to be influenced by modern digressions, philosophies and sciences falsely so-called, or by creeds and theories of the dark ages. "They shall all be taught of God" is a promise which belongs to the entire household of faith; and the Word of God is "meat in due season," and is the strength provided for their strengthening, upbuilding and preparation for a share in the kingdom.

THE VOICE OF THE LORD

FEBRUARY 14.—1 SAMUEL 3:1-13, 19, 20.

SAMUEL DEVOTED TO GOD BEFORE HIS BIRTH, BY HIS MOTHER—AN OPENING FOR SERVICE—FAITHFULNESS IN SERVICE—CALLED TO HIGHER SERVICE—SAMUEL THE FIRST OF ISRAEL'S PROPHETS—JOHN THE BAPTIST THE LAST.

"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."—1 Samuel 3:9.

Today's study gives a little insight into the family conditions of the Israelites at a time not long after the days of Samson and of Ruth. It shows us the deep religious sentiment prevailing amongst many of the people. The Tabernacle of the Lord, in this study styled the Temple, was located at Shiloh, a few miles north of Jerusalem. The priest in charge was Eli. The people by divine direction went annually to worship the Lord, to offer sacrifice, etc., at the Feast time, the Passover.

The father and the mother of Samuel were of these annual worshipers before Samuel was born. It was on the occasion of one of these visits that Hannah made earnest prayer to the Lord for a son, vowing that if her petition was granted, her son should be devoted to the Lord's service for life. Her prayer was answered. The child was born and named Samuel, which signifies In God's Name. When he was weaned he was presented to the Lord through Eli, the priest—to be the latter's servant, assistant, in the service of the Tabernacle and the service of the priest's home, which was connected with the Tabernacle. The word weaned we may properly understand to signify, not the time merely when the child ceased to receive suck from the mother, but the time when he was able to do without his mother's care—probably ten years old.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD CHILDREN

It is difficult to imagine the value to a child of being well-born—born of healthy parents, and particularly of intelligent and God-fearing parents. Few realize the dignity and responsibility of the parental office. Many are aware of the fact that vitality and constitution proceed from father to child—whether this be slight vitality or strong vitality, weak constitution or strong constitution. The mother indeed has to do with this also, since the portion assigned to her by nature is that of nourisher, provider, for the child, up to the time of its weaning.

But the still more important part of the mother's responsibility toward the child few parents realize. The mother's mentality during the period of gestation stamps itself upon her unborn child. Her fretfulness or vacillation or discontent, or her peace, her joy, her high ideals, are affecting not only her own happiness, but stamping almost indelibly her offspring. In view of this, how serious is the responsibility of motherhood, as well as fatherhood!

Moreover, we must remember that the mother's attitude of mind is largely under the influence and control of her husband. He is the provider, caretaker, of his wife. The responsibility is with him to place before his wife, at this important period of life, high ideals, noble sentiments, helpful suggestions, peaceful and restful surroundings. Thus parents cooperating intelligently might produce children even nobler than themselves, as their ideals may be better than were their own birth conditions; or reversely, they may produce children inferior to themselves, while their conditions are possibly more favorable than those of their parents.

The Bible declares that we are all born in sin, "misshapen in iniquity, in sin did our mothers conceive us"; but, as we have seen, these conditions of the fallen race may be accentuated or diminished to a considerable degree by the mental conditions of the parents, their appreciation of their office. But how often children come into the world undesired and permanently marked thereby to their disadvantage through life! How favorable is the condition, in comparison, of the child that is desired, prayed for, prepared for, and whose mental conditions have been well provided for by the parents! Samuel, the subject of today's study, was such a child—such a man.

GOD'S REPROOF OF ELI

Our lesson opens with the declaration that the child Samuel "ministered unto the Lord before Eli"; that is to say, he was a servant of the Lord by virtue of his being a servant to Eli, who was the Lord's representative and priest. The Word of Jehovah was precious in those days; that is, it was seldom that God sent messages at that time. Perhaps that of the angel of the Lord who appeared to the father and mother of Samson, probably fifty years before, was the last direct communication between the Lord and any of his people Israel. "There was no open vision"—visions and revelations were not then being given. The divine plan was hidden. The Urim and the Thummim answers of the Lord to the inquiries of the people had ceased.

It is supposed that Eli at this time was about seventy years of age—some think nearer eighty. His vision was dim. He was sleeping in one apartment and little Samuel, his servant, in another. The latter heard a voice calling him and three separate times went to Eli to ask what service he could render, only to be told that it was a mistake, and that he had not been called. But by the third time Eli the priest realized that it was God who had called Samuel; and he instructed the lad that if the voice should again be heard, he should answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." And so it was. The voice came again, and apparently the angel of the Lord appeared to Samuel at the same time. Then the Lord gave a message to Samuel respecting Eli—foretelling the sad end of the lives of his two sons, and Eli's own death, and that Eli's family should nevermore serve the Lord as priests. The inference is given that Eli's sons misused their position as under priests, taking more of the sacrifices than they were properly allowed in the divine arrangement, and besides this, practising immorality, and thus misleading the people into unrighteousness, whereas, as the Lord's servants and priests, they should have been instructors of the people in righteousness, both by precept and example.

DIVINE DISAPPROVAL OF WEAK CHARACTER

This was not the first time that the Lord had reproved Eli regarding the wrong course of his sons and what would happen. Years before a message had been sent him on this very subject, and although Eli himself apparently was faithful and loyal to God, he had not restrained his sons; hence he was a sharer in the penalty which came upon his sons.

In the morning Eli inquired of Samuel whether or not the Lord had spoken any further, and what he said. It was a trial to Samuel to tell his friend and benefactor, who was like a father to him, respecting the Lord's criticism and pronouncement of judgment against himself and his family; but Eli demanded to know the full particulars, and we read that "Samuel told him every whit." Thus it is often with the Lord's faithful servants; their tenderness of heart, their sympathy, might prompt them to hide, to cover, matters which their sense of duty may require them to speak boldly. In every case the individual's conscience must be educated, and of course the Word of God is the educator.

When Eli heard what the Lord had declared respecting his family, he answered most loyally, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." But however faithful and submissive he may thus appear to be, we know that his character was not satisfactory to God. There are many like Eli,

willing to take, without murmuring, the punishments which God metes out; but the Lord prefers characters that are stronger. Eli would have been more pleasing to the Lord had he had more firmness of character—a clearer appreciation of his duty toward the Lord as his servant, and toward his children as their father. We may be sure that strong characters are more pleasing to everybody. They may in some respects be more difficult to deal with; but, nevertheless, firmness of character is something that is a jewel, highly esteemed by all wise men and women, as well as by the Lord.

Samuel grew in favor with God and with Eli and with all the people of Israel, as they came to know him; and they perceived that the Spirit of the Lord was with him, and that he would be a representative of God amongst them.

All in Samuel's time could not be priests, but only those of the priestly tribe. All then could not be prophets, but merely such as God was pleased to use as his mouthpieces. As St. Peter says, "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit." But, as St. Peter proceeds to tell us, the prophecies were not generally understood by those who uttered them, but were meant to be understood by the church of this age, in due time, as the holy Spirit would make them known—"meat in due season."

As Samuel is styled the first of the prophets of Israel, so the Lord informs us that John the Baptist was the last of those prophets, and that "none were greater than he." It astounds us perhaps to find the Bible clearly teaching that while the offices of prophet and priest were restricted in olden times, as we have seen, yet, during this Gospel age, all who come unto God through Christ may become priests, and every priest of this new order may be a prophet of the Lord.

Failure to discern the change from the Jewish dispensation to the Christian dispensation, which began at Pentecost, leaves many Christian people in confusion of mind. Jesus clearly presents the matter, saying, "Verily I say unto you, There hath not risen a greater prophet than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

The church is the kingdom of God in embryo. It is to be the kingdom of God after being set up at the second coming of Christ, by the power of the first resurrection, but even now it is God's kingdom class in preparation, being educated, tested, in respect to faith, obedience and loyalty. The overcomers will be the church of glory, the kingdom of glory; but even in the embryo state, these are styled by St. Peter a royal priesthood. He is not in this speaking of any clerical class as a priesthood, but speaking of all who become united to Christ, of every faithful believer anointed with the holy Spirit, as such a priest in things pertaining to God. He is a priest in the sense that he is counted in as a member of the body of the great High Priest. As a member of Christ he is associated in the work of sacrifice, "presenting his body a living sacrifice" daily.

Additionally, all of the royal priesthood class, even at the present time, are God's prophets, God's mouthpieces. These, and these only, are authorized to speak in the name of the Lord. Their ordination, or authorization, does not come by any laying on of hands of bishops or anybody else; but, as the Scriptures declare, it comes directly from God—through the anointing of the holy Spirit. Hearken to St. John speaking to the whole church. He says, "Ye have an unction [anointing] from the Holy One, and ye all know it." Whoever has this anointing of the Spirit should be able to discern its influence in his heart and life, and should recognize that it is his authorization to serve as a priest and as a prophet of the Lord; as St. Peter says, "that we should show forth the praises of Him who hath called us."

1914—REPORTS FROM FOREIGN BRANCHES—1914

BRITISH BRANCH REPORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

We have pleasure in sending a summarized account of the work of the British Branch for the year 1914. As you will see by the figures subjoined, there is a good work to report. The sales of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES have increased by more than 20,000 copies, our total British circulation for the year being 131,984. Besides this number we sent out to Australia over 26,000 copies, or a total British output of 158,264 STUDIES. The circulation of free literature is also considerably in excess of last year's figures. We sent out of London for volunteer work, for the class extension service and for the PHOTO-DRAMA work a total of 15,787,950 items, representing in tract pages 262,770,280, a huge figure. However, our report does not increase all the way; for the war came in the midst of our work, and immediately began to restrict it—but not to a great extent.

The general colporteur work suffered first, and then the Brethren, as well as ourselves here, were hindered from obtaining halls for public witnessing, because so many were required by the military authorities. But the war helped as well as hindered; for many were much more inclined to hear what we had to say, so that both in the public meetings and to the colporteurs there was a preparation for the message of truth. Also the people more able to buy the sets of the STUDIES were more attentive, and many of these have shown a warm interest in the truth. It must be said that the colporteur work has been very much helped by the recent methods of furthering their work. Brother Rutherford's extended tour resulted in the selling of over 10,500 volumes of STUDIES, and the follow-up work after the PHOTO-DRAMA is also of very great help. It was believed that sets of STUDIES could not be sold here, but now this has become the common thing; and our output of Vols. 4, 5, 6 has largely increased. The war has not made an appreciable difference in the outward aspect of things; but it is impossible that such a state can continue, and no doubt there will be a pinch in the spending capacity of the people not at present keenly felt.

There has been little outward opposition to the spreading of the truth along our usual lines; the Lord has kept back violent opposition, and so we can report the greatest witness yet given here. The outlook is not bright, and we see other factors at work which indicate that our freeness of service cannot long continue. We rejoice in whatever is afforded to us, and we hope to be faithful to our Head until the work is accomplished. The first six months of the year saw little activity in the class extension work, but the advent of the DRAMA came about the time the class extension territory had been covered; and since then the brethren have been energtic in this newer phase of service.

The DRAMA has now been shown in London and 97 other cities and towns in Great Britain and Ireland, and has been attended by 1,226,650 people, London figures being 25 exhibitions with 425,000 in attendance. Outside London attendance 800,100. The London exhibitions were 22 of two weeks each, and 3 others of four weeks each. The signed cards for further literature, etc., numbered in London 7,470; and so far, over five thousand books have been sold through these. In the country over 12,000 cards have been left, and the resultant sales is about the same proportion. In London the cloth Scenarios were in good demand; in two centres alone 7,966 copies were sold. Thus we feel that this great city has had an opportunity of gaining some knowledge of our loving Heavenly Father's character and plan.

The friends have everywhere risen loyally to their opportunities of service. The Volunteer matter has gone out well—you will notice that we have sent out nearly 7,000,000 B. S. M. The work has, as you know, continued to make increased sacrifices upon the time and the means of the brethren, but the sacrifices have been made to the blessing of increased faith and love among the brethren.

We praise the Lord for all the mercies of the way, and we will keep on with his work till he shall bid us cease. We are going on with such work as is at hand, hoping to do it to his praise. With love in the Lord,

Your servants in Him,

J. HEMERY, H. J. SHEARN, WM. CRAWFORD,
British Branch Managers.

SUMMARY OF OUTPUT OF "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"

STUDIES, all kinds	158,264
To Australia, out of above	26,280
Total British local sales	131,984

OUTPUT BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY AND OTHER TRACTS.

BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY	6,932,300
EVERYBODY'S PAPER	5,828,200
Colporteur tracts	302,000
Hell pamphlets	28,250
DRAMA volunteer	1,958,000
Free Scenarios	739,200
	15,787,950
Or Tract pages	252,607,200
Books (Manual, MANNA, Poems, etc.)	3,246
Scenario, paper	18,351
Scenario, cloth	5,717

Booklets	23,679
Letters, out	35,174
Letters, in	31,425

AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH REPORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

We are glad again to think that you will be pleased with the year's work. It has been a year of progress as the result of the increase of love and zeal and spirit of sacrifice generally among the friends. Yet we realize that there is much to be done here; and that it may be some months before the door of opportunity is closed for laboring and suffering for the truth's sake.

Last year was a record with its 30,000 volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES; but it has been exceeded and the output has reached over 40,000, as you will see from the appended statement. The colporteurs have done well; and while the war has tightened money considerably, yet it has increased interest in the matters dealt with in the STUDIES, so that there is still a good work going on. We have about thirty colporteurs in the field now, some doing moderately and some doing splendidly. Some have been ever so much more successful since the war broke out than previously. Many more volumes would have been put out if we had had them to supply orders; but, as you are aware, our shipments were stopped.

The PEOPLES PULPITS, which have been mostly sent through the post, continue to bring good interest, and the list of subscribers has steadily increased. THE WATCH TOWER list also continues to grow, which will indicate to you best the amount of progress, although it is still so that one WATCH TOWER serves for may be a family or for one or two readers.

While the Tract Fund shows a good increase over last year, yet it does not represent probably more than half what has been spent by the classes in special efforts under the auspices of the Society. While Brother Gates has been used by the Perth Class for many public efforts, the Sydney class have used Brother O. Walters, and the Brisbane class has served many outlying small towns with several brethren. In this way much has been done without expense to the Society. Brother Nelson has traveled mostly in New Zealand and Queensland, and has been a means of blessing to the friends at those places. He is now in Queensland, and we hope to see him once more at our Melbourne convention Christmas time.

We still have about thirty-five newspapers publishing the sermons. Some opposition has been strongly working against these, and has succeeded in one or two instances; but generally the editors have been able to take it for what it is worth. Some of the editors have been more than pleased with the matter of the sermons themselves, and have realized that their readers are appreciating them. We have heard of many cases of strangers getting quite interested through this service. At the same time we feel that the friends generally do not fully realize their opportunity of encouraging the papers in the good work.

You will find a list of extension efforts and pilgrim public meetings, but this is by no means complete, as we know we have not had returns from all the classes that have been busy. Along this line we are glad to say that the visit of Brother Hollister in the early part of the year was very much appreciated and much good was accomplished, not only in encouraging the brethren everywhere, but also creating new interest. We do rejoice in all the good providences of our God.

PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

The PHOTO-DRAMA has been shown in Wellington, N. Z., the attendances totalling about 40,000. The class there nobly shouldered the whole expense, which amounted to about £200; but with experience now gained, this will not need to be so great elsewhere. We have evidences, however, that good will be accomplished by this means of declaring "the whole counsel of God" as revealed in his Word. We now have the films in Melbourne, and preparations are well advanced for the work. We feel sure that we are voicing the feeling of the International Bible students in Australasia when we express gratitude for the generosity on the part of Brooklyn in affording us two sets of such expensive outfits. When we realize how much sacrifice is involved in the way of patient toil, as well as of substance by others in the production of this wonderful exhibition, it makes us feel the responsibility of now doing our part to our utmost with what is entrusted to us, in order that the work may be accomplished here. The Melbourne church, though generally poor in this world's goods, has followed the example of Wellington in the spirit of sacrifice, and has promised eighty pounds toward the expense of the production.

We had our Finale on Sunday and had record meetings both afternoon and evening. Twelve hundred were present and many were unable to get into the Hall. I took the speaking part and endeavored to follow the notes suggested in the instructions. The Lord was with us, and we believe that much good was done. Altogether we have over 200 names of interested. These are now being called upon by three of our best colporteurs, and we feel sure of good follow-up meetings in the same hall for the next three Sunday nights, when I am to give Chart Talks. We reckon that we showed to 22,850 people, or rather attendances; for many attended every one of the exhibitions.

The DRAMA started in Geelong this week. Geelong is a city of churches, hard to wake up. But the Lord arranged to stir them up. The council of churches made a strenuous effort to hinder our having the theatre, which is under the control of the Town Council.

We cannot run several cities at the same time here; but though it will take us a little while to get round, it is beautiful to see the effect and to realize that the Lord is directing our steps and blessing the work.

The work all over is, we think, progressing well, not only in the all-important deepening of the spirit of consecration personally of those who have been some time under the hallowed influences of the truth, but in numbers. These are growing, in some cases, quite rapidly. We hope, however, that while the door of opportunity remains open even greater things may be accomplished. It is good to realize that there never has been a time when it was so easy to get people to think along the lines of the truth; and that the shackles of error are breaking and the mists of the dark ages are being dispelled by the bright shining of the glorious Sun of Righteousness.

While the clouds of trouble roll over the earth in fulfilment of the Word, thus in accord with our expectations, as though the great divine time clock has struck the end of the Gentile Times, we are resting in the promise that our "deliverance draweth nigh" and are seeking to identify ourselves with the kingdom which is being set up and co-operate in its glorious work of turning "the pure language to the people." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"—Isaiah 52:7.

With Christian love to yourself and all of like precious faith,

Yours in the service of Christ, R. E. B. NICHOLSON.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES	38,713
" " " " —Magazine form	1,321
Booklets	2,433
Total	42,467
Free Literature sent out:	
B. S. M. and EVERYBODY'S PAPER	1,129,300
WATCH TOWERS	4,287
Debates	1,000
Hell TOWERS	3,487
Total	1,138,074

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters received	4,370
" dispatched	4,444

A goodly amount of pilgrim work was done by Brother Edward Nelson, Brother Robert Hollister and myself; but the exact figures are not obtainable at the moment. Considerable of this work was also done in New Zealand.

EXPENDITURES, ETC.

Pilgrim, Extension Work, Halls, Advertising, etc	280:12:—	
Postage, freight, etc	49:—:5	
Rent, gas, stationery, personal expenses	56:—:—	
PHOTO-DRAMA Expense, Customs Duty, etc	31:15:8	
Supply of Free Literature	394:17:—	
	812: 5:1	=$3,947.56
Tract Fund Donations	827: 9:7	= 4,021.55
Dr. to Brooklyn	1,597:11:2	= 7,764.13

THE WORK IN GERMANY

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I send you the yearly report, and am glad to say that again, by the Lord's grace, the amount of literature circulated

exceeds that of the preceding year by about one-third. The totals are as follows:

Volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES—German	24,136
Volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES—other languages	1,070
Volumes MANNA	1,079
Volumes DIVINE PLAN in journal form	8,770
TOWERS on Hell	31,085
Booklets—German	12,946
Booklets—Foreign	2,277
German TOWERS, including 5,000 copies monthly to regular readers	78,040
BIBLE STUDENTS Quarterly and Volunteer matter—German	5,015,200
BIBLE STUDENTS Quarterly and Volunteer matter—other languages	122,900

The Lecture and Pilgrim Service was quite extensive this year, with good results. A number of new classes, of 20 to 40 consecrated, have been started; and others have doubled.

Number of Public Meetings	262
" in attendance	52,894
" of addresses for free Literature	14,743

EXPENDITURES, ETC.

Printing, Lectures, Pilgrim Service, Rent, Household, etc	104,282.16 Marks
Donations—German and Swiss—European	58,704.16 "
	45,578.00 Marks
Amount of cash from Brooklyn, plus proceeds from books sold to cover balance.	
Letters and Cards received	13,555
" " " sent out	6,823

We have quite a large stock of books on hand, which no doubt will be very much in demand in the near future, since the friends are zealously calling attention to the fulfilment of prophecy in the European or universal war. We hope, indeed, to be able to still circulate a number of million copies of B. S. M. on timely subjects before our works this side of the veil is ended. If the six or seven thousand readers of the German TOWER in Europe let their light shine out fearlessly, as the opportunities increase and circumstances offer or demand, the testimony will surely have been given according to the Lord's own Word (Matthew 24:24), so far as this part of the world is concerned. We are glad to know that it is even more so the case in other parts, especially in America.

With confidence in God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and with much love to yourself and your faithful colaborers everywhere, I beg to remain

Your humble brother, O. A. KOETITZ.

SWEDISH BRANCH REPORT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

By the Lord's grace we have passed another year in his blessed service, on this side of the "veil," and it is accordingly my greatly appreciated privilege and duty to send you the usual report of the work done in this land during the last year, under the auspices of the Society.

Although it has often, even from the beginning of the past year, been very difficult for us to understand the Lord's guidance and to recognize his will respecting his work and its interests in this part of the field, and although we have often been absolutely unable to see any part of the way before us respecting the same, we cannot now, as we look back and compare the past experiences with their already noticeable results, do anything but give thanks and praise to God, when we can see that it is he who, to a great extent through you, beloved Brother Russell, and also through surrounding circumstances and by his Word and its spirit—has directed our steps on the way which we did not know beforehand. It is with deep gratitude toward the Lord for the opportunity he has thus granted us to be, even during the past year, his colaborers and yours, that we now present the following figures, etc., which we hope will help you a little to judge of the condition of the work here.

Down through the year the propagation of the harvest message and the gathering together of the Lord's saints have continued and developed more and more all over the land, so that—in spite of all adverse circumstances and hindrances—the results of our efforts to proclaim the good news in different lines have exceeded those of previous years; and there has never before been a time when we have seen a more general manifestation of the spirit of love and zeal, of brotherly-kindness, patience, humility and faith amongst the brethren in Sweden.

Though several of our most successful colporteur brethren have been kept away from the work during the last three months by being mobilized for war and for other reasons, still the circulation of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES has not gone down, but exceeds, by 3,065 copies, that of the previous year. The pressure and fear of the present war seem to make many people more willing now than at any previous time to investigate the truth. The free distribution of volunteer matter has also made some increase, as you will see. It may at this time interest you to be reminded of the fact that from the start of this little branch of the great harvest work until now, there has through it been circulated 200 thousand copies of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and more than 5 millions of the Society's good tracts.

The number of subscribers to the Swedish WATCH TOWER has grown from 2,174 to 2,344, who have paid kronor 5,636 in subscriptions, against kronor 5,244 the previous year. Regular subscriptions for the year to the Swedish newspapers which publish your sermons weekly have been received through this office to the number of 1,390. In one of these newspapers nearly one whole page has stood at our disposal the whole year.

The regular pilgrim service, in which six Swedish brethren have taken part during the year, has been richly blessed by the Lord; and besides this, a large number of mass meetings have been held in all parts of the land, attended by tens of thousands of attentive listeners, who have demonstrated their interest in the message by purchasing thousands of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES when departing from these meetings. We have also had the pleasure of meeting together with others of "like precious faith" in conventions, on a larger scale than ever before, as not fewer than 18 conventions have been held in different parts of the country during the year, most of them in the summer time. Those conventions were attended by from 30 to 350 truth friends, and every one of them has been successful and spiritually helpful. The number of meetings held here under the auspices of the Society has grown from 1,576 to 1,820.

One of the surest proofs of increasing appreciation and love for the truth is the fact that the absolutely voluntary contributions for the propagation of the harvest message received at this office exceed the preceding year's large sum by not less than 20,000 kronor, and this in spite of the poverty of nearly all the friends here and the hard times.

After all the difficulties and disappointments (caused to a great extent by the European war condition) in connection with the preparation for the presentation of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION to the Swedish people, we finally succeeded, as you already know, so that the DRAMA was shown here for the first time on September 25. From that day the DRAMA has been presented to overcrowded houses twice every day in from one to three Swedish cities. The interest in this DRAMA is remarkable indeed. We have seen many people standing in the street in bad weather for fully two hours in order to secure a seat; and in the evenings usually from 1,000 to 2,500 people are turned away from the halls in the different places. Up to date we have given 184 DRAMA presentations of two hours each, with a total attendance of 89,650 people in seven of the largest cities of Sweden. As far as has been possible to ascertain, probably twice that number have had to be turned away for want of room, although we have everywhere had some of the largest halls obtainable. Additionally, preparations have already been made for showing the DRAMA in a good many more places before the holiday season.

The 10,000 edition of the Scenario of the PHOTO-DRAMA in book form, which you authorized us to begin with, is nearly gone, so that we have already been compelled to prepare for publishing a new edition. Of the free Scenario in paper form we have sent out 110,000 copies, and it looks as if we should soon need a new large edition of this also. All this seems to us as an illustration of the Lord's words by the Prophet: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I shall send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."—Amos 8:11.

As the work grows rapidly all over the field where we, by the Lord's grace, have been placed, the office work grows accordingly; and still the office force here has not increased in number, but has really decreased since the starting of the DRAMA work, in that some of its noble members have been wholly taken out in that new branch, as operators, instructors, etc. The regular DRAMA force here contains more than twenty members, fully engaged in that branch. We are all very glad indeed for the privilege given to us of having a share with you in the "afflictions of Christ for his church," and also in your sacrifices and sufferings for the truth's sake in preparing the "groaning creation" for the coming "times of

restitution of all things." More and more do we realize that our present opportunities are wonderful and precious indeed, more so than any words can say; and as we see how the big clouds gather above us, and how men's hearts are trembling in fear of the approaching storm, which already has begun the shaking of the present order of things with its institutions and governments, we cannot but "lift up our heads and rejoice," knowing that "our redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21:28.

You yourself, dear Brother Russell, are always included in our ardent prayers before the throne of heavenly grace; and we pray that we also may continually have a place in your prayers and supplications on behalf of "all the saints," that we all with you may be kept faithful until the end of our race-course and then be granted an "entrance abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Asking you, on account of all the Swedish brethren, and especially each member of the Bible House family in Orebro, to kindly accept their warm Christian love with thanks and gratitude for all that you, as the Lord's messenger and representative, have been to all of us during the past year, I am

Your brother and colaborer in Christ,

AUG. LUNDBORG.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK

Copies of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, circulated at cost	43,526
Various other books and booklets—MANNA, TABERNACLE SHADOWS, etc	15,678
Total	59,204
Eko från talarstolen (PEOPLES PULPIT), issued free	681,300
Other free tracts, free DRAMA Scenarios and copies of the Swedish WATCH TOWER	135,023
Total	816.323
Amounting in tract pages to	16,221,056
Number of subscribers to the Swedish WATCH TOWER	2.344
Number of sermons in newspapers, about	200,000
Number of meetings held under the auspices of the Society	1.820
Number of miles traveled in preaching tours	117,837
Letters and cards sent out	8.745
Letters and cards received	6,987
Total number of various shipments, by mail and by railroad	63,505

EXPENDITURES

Pilgrims, Conventions and other meetings	Kr. 21,621.52	=$ 5,843.65
Translations, printing, binding, paper, etc	27.311.96	= 7,381.61
Freight and postage	4.527.56	= 1,223.67
Helps to poor Colporteurs	4.211.95	= 1,138.37
The newspaper service	2,166.28	= 585.48
Office expenses, rent, light, heat, etc.	7.108.38	= 1.921.18
The PHOTO-DRAMA service	22,541.99	= 6,092.43
Total	Kr. 89,489.64	=$24,186.39

RECEIPTS

Voluntary donations to the Tract Fund	Kr. 38,954.43	=$10,528.23
Voluntary donations to the DRAMA service	15,056.83	= 4,069.11
Swedish WATCH TOWER subscriptions	5.636.55	= 1,523.39
Sold books, pamphlets, etc	29,901.04	= 8,081.36
Total	Kr. 89,548.85	=$24,202.09
Balance on hand	Kr. 59.21	=$ 15.70

SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It is with mingled feelings that I present the report of our labors in the harvest field for the past twelve months. We are deeply grateful to God that October, 1914, finds us still busy in the Lord's Great Service, and that the year that has gone has been the busiest of our office existence. The Lord has been very good to us, opening doors of opportunity, and we have sought ever to be on the alert to enter in. And now we realize that we stand on the threshold of the kingdom, and that possibly our next report will not be to Brooklyn, but to Headquarters beyond the veil. We are conscious, however, that there is work still to be done here below, and are determined by God's assisting grace not to slacken our efforts (though we long for the homecoming) but to work with all diligence as long as the day lasts. Pray for us, dear Brother, that the blessing of God may rest upon our humble efforts to serve Him and that we may be used abundantly here in gathering in the last grains of ripe wheat for the Lord's garner.

From the accompanying report you will see that our output of volumes has been largely increased, and that a greater quantity of literature of all kinds has passed through our hands. Everywhere throughout South Africa we find an increased interest in the truth since the beginning of the present strife of nations. Men who formerly looked upon the subject as a huge joke, are now asking with scared faces, "What does it all mean?" We have neither time nor inclination for the inevitable "I told you so," but are only too glad to explain the significance of current events to all who are now ready to listen to present truth.

The meetings of the Ecclesia at Durban are well sustained and the average attendance is larger than ever before. During the year I have made three pilgrim journeys, covering nearly 3,000 miles, and have lectured in many of the large towns and some of the smaller ones in the Union. On these visits I have been much impressed with the growth in grace of the dear brethren throughout the country, some of whom, in comparative isolation, have been growing like calves in the stall. I have been twice to the Transvaal and once to Cape Colony, and am just about to embark upon another tour of the Cape, right down the coast to Capetown, returning by the Western Province.

The Native work continues as interesting as ever, and under the able guidance of our two native teachers, Brothers Jordan and Tshange, this work is spreading considerably in this part of the continent. A dear brother who has been colporteuring in Cape Colony reports considerable interest among the natives there, and at their request I am taking Brother Jordan down to establish classes in various centres, and otherwise to assist the interested ones. In Nyasaland the work continues to develop, especially in the Northern Province. I am sending to you an interesting letter from a leading brother there. The Nyasaland brethren have had their faith much strengthened by the fact that a fight took place in their own land, at Karonga, between the British and the Germans, a tangible evidence that we are in the beginning of the time of trouble.—Daniel 12:1.

During the year we have had two conventions in South Africa, one at Johannesburg, already reported, and the other at Durban. At both of these we received much blessing from the Lord, and the spiritual life of all present was greatly stimulated. Our one regret, dear Brother, was that we were so far removed from Brooklyn that we could not have you with us in person. We know, however, that you were with us in spirit and we spoke of you and joyfully anticipated the great meeting at the end of the way, now so close at hand.

The newspaper work continues normal. We have added two papers to our list during the year, but some others have dropped out. The scarcity of material, due to the war, has made the newspapers here very jealous of their space. All over we have much to thank God for, and are inspired by past experience to a still larger confidence for the future, whether long or short.

Permit me here, dear Brother, to express the gratitude to God felt by all the dear friends in Africa, both black and white, for your faithful ministrations, and to assure you of their entire confidence and loving devotion. Our prayer is that he who has brought you through many difficulties may sustain you in the special trials that necessarily pertain to the end of the way and that we all, with your well beloved self, may appear before God in Zion.

With much Christian love, I have the honor to remain,

Your brother and colaborer, WM. W. JOHNSTON.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK

Free literature circulated — English	67,650	270,600 Pages
Free literature circulated — Hollandish	38,380	135,520 "
	106,030	406,120 "
Newspaper sermons sent out		7,720
Parcels dispatched		165
Letters dispatched		1,257
P. R. L. B. wrappers		1,316
New TOWER subscribers		30
Meetings held		380
Pilgrim journeys		3
Miles traveled		2,986

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Cr.	£	s.	d.	*Dr.*	£	s.	d.
Tract fd. donations	13	12	0	Office expenses	109	7	4
TOWER subs.	7	4	0	Fr'ght & postage	42	9	9
Sales	87	12	7	P. R. L. B. exp.	78	6	8
				Pilgrim expenses	60	17	11
				Grants to native workers	21	5	0
				Bank charges	2	16	5
	108	8	7		315	3	1

CASH STATEMENT

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Cash on hand, Nov. 1, 1913	43	14	1	Total expenses	315	3	1
Local receipts	108	8	7	Repayment loan.	32	0	0
Loan	7	0	0	Cash on hand	72	16	0
From Brooklyn	260	16	5				
	419	19	1		419	19	1

REPORT FROM FINLAND

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I send you a short report of the harvest work in Finland for 1914. God's grace toward us during the past year has been exceedingly great. God has opened doors all over; and we have tried with our feeble powers to use the opportunities, although we have felt that "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

In the beginning of the year we finished the publishing of the six volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in Finnish; and since then we have rejoiced with our Finnish brethren and sisters, as they have the whole light of present truth set forth in these blessed books. Six newspapers have during the year published "Pastor Russell's Sermons," one of the papers having a circulation of more than 30,000.

The interest in present truth has been growing amongst the friends, and they have tried to do their very best in spreading the Glad Tidings. A very beautiful opportunity was afforded in THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION. The glorious message went out during two months in the nicest form; and every day was a festival.

Up to the last of September the work was going on with very great force; but on October 1 everything was changed, and since that day it has been very difficult to do anything. We have tried to do, but we have had only few possibilities. We see how the night is coming. You know that the sun is going down in the "East." Nevertheless we are in good condition, filled with the best hopes, because we see the new day and how the Sun of Righteousness is rising. We are therefore very happy and thankful toward God, who has used you as a channel to bring us the knowledge of his plan and prospects.

As I think it will interest you, I send a report of the Harvest work in our country:

SUMMARY OF THE WORK

Output of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES		22,409
Output of various books and booklets		27,622
Total		50,031
Number of subscribers to the Finnish TOWER		1,124
Number of subscribers to the Swedish TOWER		117
Total		1,241
Bibles sold		130
Volunteer Tracts	479,602	
Sample TOWERS	46,573	
Scenarios	70,478	
		596,653
Number of Meetings held	862	
" PHOTO-DRAMA Entertainments	218	
		1,080
Number of Miles traveled in Preaching Tours		29,986
Attendance at Meetings	130,294	
Attendance at Entertainments	80,500	
		210,794
Letters and Cards sent out		4,962
" " " received		3,892
Total number of various Shipments		47,751
Total Expenditures	Fmk. 80,319:61	or $15,477.00
" Receipts	" 74,461:00	" 14,348.21
Shortage	" 5,858:00	" 1,128.79

I assure you of our deep love, and that we daily ask God's blessing upon you.

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

KAARLO HARTEVA.

REPORT FROM SUISSE-GERMAN WORK

Following is the I. B. S. A. annual report of distribution of literature in German Switzerland from November 1, 1913, to November 14, 1914:

STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. I., German	1,694	
STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. II., German	308	
STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. III., German	303	
STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. IV., German	308	
STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. V., German	224	
STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. VI., German	287	
Total	3,124	
Volume I., in journal form, German	1,944	
MANNA, German	182	
Bible Helps, German	42	
Booklets, German	8,344	417,401
German WATCH TOWER (600 monthly)	7,200	360,000
Total number Tract Pages		777,401
Hell TOWER in German, etc	6,442	358,700
B. S. M. and Tracts	314,297	7,983,500
Total number Tract Pages		8,342,200

Respectfully submitted, SAMUEL LAUPER.

"GOULD FREE LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND"

Chapters of SCRIPTURE STUDIES and Pamphlets (WATCH TOWERS, Tracts and Special Sermons), in Brail type, loaned by mail:

Chapters	8,372
Pamphlets	2,811
Weekly sermons mailed	3,728
Letters received	2,476
Letters dispatched	2,302
Expenses	$1,106.51

EUREKA DRAMA BLESSINGS

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—

We are sending weekly reports of our EUREKA DRAMA exhibitions, but we feel sure you will be glad to hear from us, though it be but a greeting.

The year 1914 has been a momentous one to almost all the dear children of God. While we were late getting a complete outfit of the DRAMA, yet after a brief season of rehearsal we put six teams in the field, each team serving in rotation.

We started about November 15 and have been quite busy since. Eleven places have been served thus far, which means thirty-three exhibitions. At these the total attendance of adults was 4,159, making an average of 126 at each exhibition. The cost of hall rent was $105, or $3.18 per exhibition.

It makes our hearts rejoice to have been able to serve 4,159 people with the message of the ages at so small cost! May God bless you and all in the service of the truth is our prayer, with hearty New Year greeting.

MARSHALL G. ELLIS.—*Washington.*

A GIFT FOR YOUR FRIENDS

We have a special edition of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. I., to which we have added the Pyramid chapter from Vol. III. It is bound in the same style as our regular editions, except the covers are embossed with a gold pyramid.

The pyramid feature makes this volume specially attractive to beginners who are difficult to interest otherwise. After reading about the wonderful pyramid of Egypt (which is the introductory chapter of this edition), their mental appetite is sure to be whetted enough to read with interest the "DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES"; and whoever reads this, if he has a spiritual appetite, is pretty sure to go on as a Bible student.

The price of this special edition is 50c. per copy, which is less than half what such books would ordinarily sell for. We however, offer these to our readers as gifts, or for loaning to friends and neighbors, at 30c. per copy, postpaid—in any quantity, but preferably in lots of ten or multiples thereof.

IMPUTATION AND APPLICATION OF OUR LORD'S HUMAN LIFE-RIGHTS

Apparently a great many of God's people have difficulty in discerning just what is signified in the expression, "Gave himself a ransom for all." They ask, If our Lord Jesus gave his human life a ransom for Adam and his race, where has he now any right to human life to give in justification to those who accept his favor, in view of the fact that we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"?—John 3:36.

To appreciate the answer to this question, we must realize that the giving of the ransom has various features. First of all, our Lord's consecration when he was thirty years of age, which he symbolized by water baptism, represents the giving up, the surrender, of his life to God. The life which he surrendered was a perfect human life, one to which he had a full right. St. Paul tells us that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Our Lord was not a member of the Adamic race in a direct sense—in the sense of having received his life from a human father; therefore his was not a condemned life, like that of the rest of the world. Nothing more was needed. He surrendered the full equivalent of Adam's life and perfection. But he did not surrender his life to Adam; he merely put it into the Father's hands without giving it to anybody.

During the three and a half years of his ministry our Redeemer laid down his life. He completed that work at Calvary, saying there, "It is finished!" He there finished his baptism into death; he continued his self-surrender to the end. But he has not yet made any application of this human life to Adam and his race. He has merely put it into the Father's hands. It was a life that had not been forfeited, that had not been mortgaged, that had not been embargoed. He simply surrendered his life in harmony with the Father's plan.—Luke 23:46.

RIGHT TO LIFE ON TWO PLANES

When the Father raised him up on the third day, he made Jesus a spirit being. He was put to death in the flesh and was raised a spirit—quickened in spirit. (1 Peter 3:18—Diaglott) This quickened One of the new nature had this new life as a reward for his obedience in permitting his earthly life to be taken from him. But he had not forfeited his right to the earthly life; hence as a new creature he still retained this right to perfect human life. Everything that belonged to a perfect life belonged to him. He had permitted the Jews to take away his life, but he had neither surrendered nor forfeited his right to life. So when he was raised to life by the Father, he had not only the right to the spirit nature, but also the right to the earthly nature—not that he would have use for this for himself; for any one having the divine nature would have neither use nor desire for the earthly nature. The specific right that he had was the right to give, to bestow freely upon Adam and his race, human life—the very object he had in mind when he came into the world.

So when the Lord Jesus arose from the dead and ascended up on high forty days later, he retained all the rights that he ever had. He had the right to human life, never having forfeited it; he also had the divine nature, the reward of his obedience—a superior right, a superior nature. But when he ascended up on high, he did not apply the merit of his sacrifice for the world of mankind; otherwise the whole world would not now lie in the wicked one. (1 John 5:19—Diaglott) If our Redeemer had made an application of his merit for the world when he ascended, it would have taken away the sin of the world; but he did not do this. The Scriptures tell us that the church alone has escaped from the condemnation upon the world. (Romans 8:1) Evidently, then, the world is still in the wicked one. The only ones who have escaped from this condemnation are those who have accepted the arrangement of this Gospel age. Nobody else except the consecrated class has had merit and justification from Christ.

RESTITUTION IMPUTED TO THE CHURCH

How, then, does our Lord apply the merit to the church? We answer, Not directly. If he were to apply his merit directly, it would give the church human life, human perfection. God has some better thing for the church—that the church might attain to the same divine nature to which Jesus attained. The church attains this by following in the footsteps of Jesus. This signifies that as he sacrificed his human life, and laid down his earthly rights according to the will of the Father, so all who would become members of his bride class must do the same, must surrender their earthly life, in order to be associated with him. Only if we suffer with him shall we reign with him.—2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

"If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) Then, "Where I am there shall my disciple be." (John 12:26) Whosoever will so do during this Gospel age will attain to the same divine nature, the same glory, the same immortality—the difference being that our Lord will always be Head over all, the Chief over the church, which is his body, and that they will always be his members in particular, the church in glory.

The question, then, comes up, If it was necessary for Jesus to be pure, holy, how could the church be acceptable to the Father, when they are of the depraved human nature? The answer of the Bible is that to this class who become his disciples Jesus imputes the merit of his sacrifice to the extent of covering their blemishes, their imperfections. We are to discern between give and impute. He will give his merit to the world by and by. But now he is making an imputation to the church.

By this term imputation is signified, that if the church had remained of the earthly nature the same as the world, they would by and by have the right, the same as the world, to come up out of degradation to human perfection. Jesus secured by his death the privilege of giving all those rights to the church as well as to the remainder of Adam's race. But this class, the church, forego all those rights to human perfection. When we consecrated ourselves to God, we gave up our right to become inheritors of the earth and earthly things; we gave up all our rights in the sense of merely surrendering them. By faith we believe that Jesus would in due time have given us those blessings of restitution the same as to the whole world of mankind. By faith we accept those blessings and by faith we surrender them. The only thing left for the church to do is to surrender their earthly lives. Some may have more vitality, and some may have less; some may have more talents, and some less; some may have more years, and some less; but whatever each has it is to be given up, surrendered.

So, then, at consecration the church class voluntarily surrender their earthly nature. They surrender all the earthly rights that they have of the present time, and also those rights that would have been theirs had they remained part and parcel of the world. Jesus does not give to the church at the present time any part of the ransom-sacrifice, but merely imputes to them, counts to them, that part which they might have had if they had remained a part of the world.

When Jesus died, he did not pay over a ransom as an offset for Adam. When Jesus was raised from the dead, he had not paid a ransom; and when he ascended to the Father he did not pay over a ransom for the world. But he laid in the Father's hands the merit of his sacrifice. He has been imputing of this merit down through the Gospel age to the church only, but now he has about finished the imputing to the church, and the work of giving to the world restitution is about to begin; and before it begins the merit imputed (loaned) to the church must be actually paid over to divine justice as the basis for human restitution.

WORK OF THE GOSPEL AGE TYPIFIED

On the Jewish Atonement day the High Priest, first of all, killed the bullock. That bullock represented our Lord Jesus, the perfect man, and the priest represented our Lord, the new creature. Thus he typified the consecration of the human nature and also the condition of the new creature, still in the fleshly body, typed by the priest in the first Holy.

Our Lord was in this condition of the Holy during the three and a half years of his ministry. During that time he had the privileges of the Golden Altar, and the light from the Golden Candlestick (representing the light of God's truth), and the blessings represented by the Table of Shewbread (the spiritual food). At the end of the three and a half years, having finished the work of sacrificing himself, having burned the antitypical incense, he passed under the second veil.

On the third day our Lord arose on the other side of the second veil—on the spirit plane—fully perfected as a new creature, no longer in any sense of the word a man. He could go and come like the wind. He remained with his disciples to convince them that he was no longer a man—going and coming like the wind, and appearing in various bodily forms. Then, when he ascended up on high, as the greatest antitypical High Priest he took with him the blood. The blood signifies the life of the sacrifice. He appeared in the presence of God, and there he sprinkled of the blood on the Mercy-Seat. This sprinkling of the blood on the Mercy-Seat was to make atonement for a certain class. That atonement we see was made only for the priests and the Levites—not for the world.—Leviticus 16:6.

After the High Priest had finished making the atonement for the priests and the Levites, he went out into the Court again and there began a different work. Our Lord made application of the blood for the antitypical priests and the Levites

during the ten days between his ascension and the descent of the holy Spirit at Pentecost. He made application of his merit for the church. We know this; for this satisfaction for sins was followed by the pouring out of the holy Spirit at Pentecost, the evidence that divine mercy had come to them.—Hebrews 9:24.

In the type, after the priest had offered the bullock, he then proceeded to the next part—the killing of the Lord's goat. A goat is inferior to a bullock. The Lord himself was typified by the bullock. The Lord's goat symbolized the faithful members of the church, his body. It has been the work of the Gospel age to offer up the church. Not that they were able to offer up themselves; for being naturally the members of the condemned Adamic race, they were not fit to be priests, and could not be priests until the great High Priest had made an imputation of his merit for them. Therefore, the great High Priest who offered the bullock also offered the goat.

Then we see the conclusion of the matter. In the type the blood of the goat was taken into the Most Holy and was applied, not for the priests, not for the Levites, but for the people. The blood of the bullock was applied only for the priests and the Levites; the blood of the goat, for the people. (Leviticus 16:6, 15) These two sacrifices represent all the sacrifices of the Gospel age; the superior sacrifice was that of the Lord Jesus, the inferior sacrifice was that of the church.

THE CHURCH NO PART OF THE RANSOM

There was a sufficiency of merit in the antitypical bullock to have been applied for the sins of the whole world. But it was God's arrangement that the church might be permitted to share in the sacrifice. Only those who have the privilege of sharing in the sacrifice have the privilege of sharing in the glory. It was not necessary for the satisfaction of justice that any of the church should die; but it was necessary in order for them to partake of the promised glory. Therefore, while it was a sacrifice for our sins on the Lord's part, it was necessary on our part, in order to share in his glory. He makes the sacrifice; it is not our sacrifice. As the Apostle Paul points out, we merely present our bodies. (Romans 12:1) God would not accept our sacrifice through Christ; we are accepted only in the Beloved One. (Ephesians 1:3-6) Thus by virtue of our Lord's acceptance of us is it that we have any privilege of sharing with him in the sacrifice and in the glory.

Our Lord, therefore, has still a human life ungiven away. He does not give to the church human life. He does not part with even a particle of the right to human life which he had. The Lord does not need an earthly body; neither will his church need earthly bodies. What use would Jesus make of earthly rights, or what use would we make of them? We never intend to become men again; nor does he intend to become a man again. The merit of Christ was imputed to us only for the purpose of making us acceptable sacrifices; and this merit becomes released again when the last member of the church is glorified. Then the whole value of Christ's sacrifice will be ready for appropriation for the world of mankind; for at that time the church will have ceased to be of Adam's race, having become of the divine nature.—2 Peter 1:4.

This work, then, of appropriating the merit of Jesus on behalf of the world is left until the Millennial age; when the Redeemer's kingdom will make man's restitution privileges a real boon. Therefore, as soon as the merit of Christ is appropriated for the world, he will immediately take charge of his purchased possession. He will then take his great power and reign. Then to all those redeemed ones for whom he will appropriate the merit of his sacrifice he will be ready to give the long-promised restitution blessings.

Through the Prophet David, Jehovah God said to his Son, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen [Gentiles, nations, people] for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psalm 2:8) This, we believe, is at the door. The Lord is about to take possession of the church, which is the jewel class of the whole world. The blessings which he then will give are human restitution to the race of Adam and the bringing of the whole earth, their earthly home, up to the grandeur of the Garden of Eden. This work he will share with his body, his bride.

From this Scriptural standpoint the ransom-price that Jesus gives has been a progressive matter, and is not yet completed. He began to give it when he became a man; he progressed in giving during the three and a half years of his earthly ministry; he finished the giving at Calvary. He has since been using that to which he had a right on behalf of the church, by imputation. He will have all of this merit of his sacrifice to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world—not a single individual omitted. During the thousand years he will be giving to mankind that which he has secured by his death, and which he will make applicable to them by sealing the New Covenant. That New Covenant will be sealed as soon as the church shall have been completed, as soon as the church shall have passed beyond the veil.

SPIRITUAL AND HUMAN NATURE NOT THE SAME

The views of Christian people seem to be very confused. They acknowledge that Jesus was a spirit being before he came into the world, and that he experienced some kind of change of nature in becoming a man. But very inconsistently they seem erroneously and unscripturally to reason that, having become a man, he must stay a man to all eternity—"a little lower than the angels." We should remember that the Logos was "made flesh," "humbled himself," not for all eternity, but merely "for the suffering of death, . . . that he . . . might taste death for every man."—Hebrews 2:9.

The Scriptures indicate that there is a difference in natures. As St. Paul points out, there is one flesh of man, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes and another of birds. And so on the spiritual plane—there are angels, cherubim and seraphim, just as there are beasts and birds, fishes and men, on the earthly plane. (1 Corinthians 15:39-41) Our Lord distinctly told that he left the glory that he had with the Father. He said to his disciples, "What and if you should see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?"—John 6:62.

The expression, "Where he was before," refers to a difference in nature, in condition, from that he then had. Jesus had been in the world many times before, but never before was made flesh. Jesus perhaps was the Representative of God in the Garden of Eden with Adam. Very certain it is, he was the one who gave the law to Moses as the Representative of the Father. And most assuredly he was the one who communicated with Abraham at the time when the Lord and two angels went down to Sodom, and stopped on the way to tell Abraham about the matter. Incidentally Abraham remembered that they appeared like men, ate like men, talked like men, but he knew not till afterward that they were angels. When our Lord was made flesh, it was not the first time he was on earth. On his previous visits he was a spirit being who merely assumed a flesh body as a convenience in communicating with men as the Father's Representative.

We see that this same power of materialization was used by other angels. For instance, at the time of our Lord's ascension the angels said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." We remember also that the fallen angels had the power to assume human bodies. As the Scriptures point out, they desired to be men, to live on the earthly plane and in the earthly condition, for sensual reasons. Thus they abandoned their own habitation, lived as men and sought to bring forth a new race.

A MUCH MISUNDERSTOOD SUBJECT

If Jesus during his first advent had merely appeared as a man, but had all the while been really a spirit being veiled in flesh—"incarnate"—he could not have been the Redeemer at all. The Scriptures say that Jesus was a man, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14)—not that he pretended to be a man. To be the Redeemer of man is was necessary for him to become a man, not to pretend to be one. He must be really a man; otherwise he could not have been a ransom-price for Adam; for the divine law required like for like—"life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."—Deuteronomy 19:21.

The word ransom (antilutron in the Greek) signifies a corresponding price. And so Jesus actually left the heavenly glory—not merely pretended to leave it. He who was rich for our sakes became poor, so that he was truly that which he appeared to be—the man. He was the perfect man who presented himself at Jordan—the only one who could be the corresponding price for Adam. The Scriptures represent our Lord as saying to the Father, "A body hast thou prepared me" for the suffering of death. (Hebrews 10:5) Many of us have overlooked the fact that this body was divinely prepared for a purpose—for the suffering of death, and not, as many think, a body for placing the Lord Jesus in a state of permanent humiliation before all the holy angels, as expressed in the old hymn,

"Five bleeding wounds he bears,
Received on Calvary."

Our Lord is not parading heaven under the disadvantages of a body and a nature all out of accord with his surroundings. He has already accomplished the work of sacrifice, and the merit of his sacrifice is in the hands of God. God has accepted the sacrifice that was made more than eighteen centuries ago; and on the books of justice there are to our Redeemer's credit those earthly life-rights to which, as a perfect man, he was entitled.

When God conferred upon Father Adam human life and human life-rights, he immediately became the great king of earth. And so when Jesus became the natural man he became the natural ruler. He was the One to whom the earth belonged; and the perfect man would have had the right to earth and all the fulness thereof. Instead of keeping these rights and becoming the grand earthly Potentate, Jesus surrendered all these earthly rights and received the reward of obedience—not the reward of sacrifice, but the reward of obedience. He still has these human life rights, and is about to give them to the world of mankind, upon condition that they shall desire to come into harmony with God, that they shall enter into a covenant of obedience. By his own blood Jesus makes them eligible to full restitution to all that was lost in Eden and to all that was redeemed at Calvary.

The appearance of our Lord in the flesh after his resurrection was only similar to the appearance that was made by himself and the angels long centuries before, and does not indicate that he was still a man. As a man he never went into a room, the door being shut; as a spirit being he could enter, the door being shut. As a spirit being he could materialize, and then dematerialize, vanish out of their sight. This materialization, dematerialization and vanishing appertain not only to the flesh, but also to the clothing. Once he appeared as a wayfarer, and once as a gardener; and then he appeared as his former self in the upper room, the doors being shut. At these various times he appeared in different garments, each time dressed suitably to the occasion. It was just as easy for him to create one style of clothing as another, and one form of body as another. It is hard to tell just where the misconceptions held by many Christian people have come in. It behooves us to be very kind and sympathetic in reproving the error, and to remember that we ourselves once had the errors and held them just as tenaciously as do others.

OUR LORD NO LONGER HUMAN

Our Lord was put to death in the flesh and quickened in spirit, or made alive in spirit; and he has been a spirit being ever since. This Spirit Being, Saul of Tarsus saw on his way to Damascus. He tells us that what he saw was gloriously bright. It was not the flesh of Jesus that was shining. The Apostle says that he caught a glimpse of Jesus in his personality—"Last of all he was seen by me also, as of one born out of due time"; that is to say, born before the time, referring to the church, the resurrection birth.

We are begotten of the Spirit, and the birth will be in the first resurrection. As it was said of Jesus, he was the firstborn from the dead; just so we, the church, will be born to spirit conditions. Then "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) We will not be in the flesh then, and it will not hurt our eyes to see our glorified Lord. We shall see him as he is! We shall be with him! And the Apostle explains that before this we shall be "changed," because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

"YOUR FATHER KNOWETH"

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of."—Matthew 6:8.

Shortly after the beginning of our Lord's ministry, he gave the discourse commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. The disciples had not yet become sons of God in the full, proper sense of the word; indeed, they could not be received into sonship until Pentecost. They were members of the fallen race, under the same condemnation as other men. The very highest claim that they could make was that which the Jews made—that of being servants of God. But now, as recorded in John 1:12, "As many as received him, to them gave he power [privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; who were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

This spirit-begetting was not possible in its full, proper sense until Jesus had made reconciliation for the sins of the world, or, at least, had prepared the way for reconciliation by his own death. In one sense of the word, however, his death had already occurred; namely, in that he had presented himself a living sacrifice, and that the Father had accepted that sacrifice. But that death must be finished, and Jesus must ascend into the presence of God and present the merit of his sacrifice, before the divine blessing would descend upon any, permitting them to be the sons of God.

THE FATHER OF THE CHURCH

We see, therefore, that Jesus spoke in an anticipatory or prophetic sense as to their relationship to God. Because they believed in him and were seeking to do his will, they were in full line with God's arrangement for their becoming sons. Just as after a person has adopted a child and while the papers are in process of being drawn up in legal form, the child might be spoken of as a son, or he might address the one adopting him as Father or Mother; so these would have the privilege of addressing God as their Father and their privilege would depend on their faith. The majority of the Jews did not have this faith, and when Jesus said that he was the Son of God, they were about to take up stones to stone him for blasphemy. But Jesus said that not only was he the Son of God, but that he would bring many sons to God; and he quoted from the Psalms in support of this assertion.—John 10:31-40; Psalm 82:6.

Thus our Lord spoke to his disciples as if they were already new creatures, had already become sons of God and had already received the holy Spirit, even though both he and they knew that this was not to be completely accomplished, until, as he told them, "not many days hence" they should actually and personally have received it—at Pentecost. Addressing the disciples from this standpoint the Master said, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." These words are part of his Sermon on the Mount. As we read, "When he was set, his disciples came unto him; and he opened his mouth and taught them." The multitude were not to call God Father, but they were to understand that those who had become the followers of the Lord Jesus could call him Father.

The word Father implies a great deal when taken in conjunction with other Scriptures. God was the Father of Adam in the sense that he gave Adam his life. Jesus was not Adam's Father, although, as the Logos, he was the one particularly active in giving Adam life. By Adam's disobedience, this life was lost for himself and for all of his children. Not only life was lost, but the Spirit of the Lord was lost, and that included the relationship of sons.

THE EVERLASTING FATHER OF HUMANITY

After Adam, we find none called sons of God down to the time of Jesus. Jesus was the first Son of God after Adam; and since our Lord's time the church have been called sons of God. (1 John 3:2) The fact that we are called sons of God implies the beginning of a new life; for the old life which we inherited from Father Adam is gone. This new life which we have received is not from Jesus, but from the Father, Jesus being the channel through which this life comes to us. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3) We see that the arrangement for the world is somewhat different. God does not purpose to beget the world of the holy Spirit, as he has the church. On the contrary, we see that Jesus is to become the Everlasting Father of the world, in due time. (Isaiah 9:6) That due time will be the great thousand-year day of the Messianic kingdom.

In that thousand-year day Christ, as the great King, Mediator between God and men, will give life to humanity. We see that the life he will give will be human life. He will be the Father of humanity, because that human life which he will give them will be something that is his own. By his obedience to God's plan he bought the right to give human life. Hence, in giving that life at his own cost, he is styled the Father of the human family. This will not mean that the world will not be considered sons of God, any more than a grandson would not be a son of the father and of the grandfather. Mankind will not receive their life directly from God, but indirectly through Christ—Christ is the Father and God the Grandfather. God does not speak in random terms, but with great exactness. This being true, we have great confidence in his Word.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

When Adam and his family became sinners, some of them went further than merely neglecting God. It was no fault of theirs that they were cut off from him. But they did not retain God in their minds, and so God gave them over to a reprobate mind. They became children of Satan in the sense that they became obedient to him. He adopted them into his family, they willingly accepting him and becoming obedient to him. Of course, Satan did not give life actually to the world, but they adopted him as their father by accepting his terms and becoming members of his family. To some of the human family our Lord said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."—John 8:44.

When Adam was rejected, he came under the sentence of death. He was left to shift for himself. The statement, You are under a curse of death, would mean, You cannot avoid dying—"Dying thou shalt die." There will be pestilences, earth-

quakes and famines. You will be subject to these because you are sinners. Mankind could not expect God to do anything for them when they were under death sentence; yet God has done much for them, even though they are sinners. He causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon the just and upon the unjust.—Matthew 5:45.

When the Jews were called of God under the Law Covenant, it brought them under a special relationship to him as servants. "Moses was faithful over his own house," a servant over the House of Israel. These servants were subject to some care, even as a caretaker in a great house would look after all the servants as well as the sons. While the son would have the more particular care, yet the servant would be cared for also.

Thus the Jews were invited to have a share in God's care. They were promised that everything would work together for their good. God would bless their flocks and herds, and would do them good if they would obey his statutes. They did not do so, and thus brought upon themselves chastisements. As we read the record of the people of Israel, we find that they were the most chastened people of history, passing through the most wonderful experiences and disciplines, through which they were brought to a high religious attitude. So when our Lord came into the world, they were of the highest religious sentiment, of the most devoted sentiment of all mankind. Many of them were prepared to have the special favor that Jesus came to give; namely, the privilege of becoming sons of God.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH THE CHURCH

The sons of God during this Gospel age are similarly under special favor of God and under special covenant with him. He has engaged to treat them as sons, not as servants; not as opposers or enemies, but as children. "God dealeth with you as with sons." (Hebrews 12:7) With this assurance that God will deal with his people as with sons, we might be surprised that the saintly people have not been blessed, as those who are unsaintly, with money, health, temporal prosperity. We inquire how this is. Is God neglecting his part when he has promised that he will deal with these as with sons? We are not sons of God according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. Having been begotten of the Spirit, we are sons of God according to the new creation, the interests of which are often best served by experiences which are not favorable to the flesh.

With these sons of God, the new creature is the special thing in God's sight. The flesh matters little. And God wishes these sons to have the proper experiences that will bring them to the required development as sons of God on the spirit plane. This means that they must ultimately die according to the flesh. There is no other way of entering into the spirit nature than by dying according to the flesh. We must all follow in the footsteps of the Master.

The trials of the narrow way are special tests of the new creature. How will the new creature act under these trials and difficulties? Will he prove loyal to God when things seem unfavorable to him according to the flesh? If so, the new creature will grow strong; and the warfare between the two, the spirit and the flesh, will finally result in the victory of the new creature, and in his birth in the first resurrection, or chief resurrection, to the spirit nature, the divine nature.

PROPER MENTAL ATTITUDE FOR PRAYER

The words of our text apply only to the new creatures. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." It is not necessary for us to use vain repetitions as the heathen do, asking God over and over again for blessings of a temporal kind. He knoweth what things we have need of; that is to say, whether we as new creatures will be most profited in the abundance of wealth or in the absence of wealth; whether we as new creatures will be most profited in the possession of health or otherwise. We are not to tell God what we wish. We are to give up our will in order that his will may be done. We are to pray, therefore, as Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done"; for "your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." The heathen do not have God as their Father, and he is not supervising their affairs. They get certain common blessings that God is providing for all—sunshine and rain.

The prayer of God's people should not be for temporal things. We know of no Scriptural illustration where the spiritual sons of God asked definitely for temporal things and received an answer. We remember that St. Paul prayed three times very earnestly for the restoration of his eyesight. God would not give him the thing he asked for, but would give him that which would be better for him as a new creature. And this affliction of poor eyesight, watery eyes, would help to keep him in remembrance of the fact that he was once a persecutor of the Lord's people. The Lord would not take away his affliction, but would give him the grace necessary. Presumably, when the Apostle learned that lesson, he did not pray for such things again; but doubtless it was to our benefit that he did not find this out until he had prayed those three improper prayers. We learn from this that we should be in the attitude to say, "Lord, Thou knowest what I have need of. Give what is best."

THE MODEL PRAYER

Some might declare that this would not be the proper way to offer a petition—that we should ask God for something definite; for instance, if one needed a coat, he should ask for a coat. But our Father has said that we need not go into particulars. God knows that we have need of bread. Our petition, therefore, when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread," is not that we think that God would forget about it, but rather as an acknowledgment on our part that all we have—our food and everything else—comes from God. He knows what we have need of, and provides these things aside from our asking. Nevertheless, it is the Father's good pleasure that we should go to him, asking forgiveness for our sins, realizing that he has made provision in advance for that forgiveness, and that only as we are merciful to others will he deal mercifully with us in respect to our trespasses. With regard to our food, we thank our Father as the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

We hallow his name—honor his name—put it first in our petitions, in our thoughts. The idea is not as to how much glory we can get; but, first of all, we mention our Father and his glorious name—we hallow his name, make it holy. Then we follow with the petition desiring that his kingdom would come; for we realize that his kingdom is the very thing that the whole world needs, and that he has promised that it shall come. This is merely to tell him of our dependence upon him, and our waiting for him and for those things which he has promised and arranged for in his kingdom. We are not merely saying, "Thy kingdom come"—we are waiting for it, expecting it. Then comes in the mention of our necessities. He knoweth what things we have need of—whether it be a full loaf, a half loaf or a quarter loaf, a small ration or a large one. Then we ask for protection from the evil one.

There is no such request as, "My shoes are needing to be replaced with new shoes," or "My coat is getting glossy." The heathen, the world might pray for these things; but we are children of God, and are to conform our prayers to what he has said. We are to take for examples the prayers of Jesus and such prayers as the apostles offered. These prayers are not so much requirements made of God, but telling him we are depending upon him, seeking to have no will of our own—merely sinking into his will, asking that his will be done in all our affairs. Then we are to live and act according to that will and according to those prayers.

MORE CONVINCING EVIDENCE DEMANDED

"Be not faithless, but believing."—John 20:27.

The words of our text are found in connection with our Lord's appearance to the eleven disciples in the upper room, St. Thomas being of the number. From the narrative we learn that just a week before this Jesus had appeared to his disciples, but St. Thomas was absent at the time. The ten who had witnessed our Lord's manifestation related to St. Thomas the things which they had seen; but their accounts seemed idle tales to him and he could not believe them. He said he thought they were too easily convinced, and that it would require stronger evidence than they had had to convince him. Unless he could see the print of the nails in our Lord's hands, and put his fingers into the print of the nails, and could be able to thrust his hand into the spear-wound in his side, he would not believe.

To some this might seem to be an example of extreme unbelief, an unwillingness to receive the testimony of the Ten as to the experiences through which they had passed. Yet to other minds it would not seem so strange. Some of us would find it difficult to believe from any lips that a person whom he had three days before seen dead and laid in the tomb had manifested by his presence to others that he was again alive; and especially hard would it be to believe that he had appeared when the doors were shut, and had disappeared, the doors still being shut. We rather fear that had we been in St. Thomas' place we would have been inclined to say, "Show us how that could be." We would have experienced the same difficulty, and would likely have said, "You think you saw something; you believe you are telling the truth,

but we think that you have been deceived." We are born with differences of mental qualities, and it is easier for some to believe than it is for others.

ST. THOMAS NOT REPROVED

However, on this occasion Jesus gave the desired demonstration. His first appearance to them as a group was, we believe, on the first day of the week, and the second manifestation was given again on the first day of the week, eight days later, under similar circumstances. St. Thomas being present, Jesus said to him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27) These were the very things St. Thomas had demanded, the very proof he had required. The words of Jesus do not convey the thought of any special reproof to St. Thomas. It would seem that the fact that the Lord gave to him the desired evidence to convince him, was an indication that he did not disapprove of his demand for more convincing demonstration than the others had had before believing a statement so marvelous as that of the other ten disciples; for if it had been a thing of which he disapproved he would not have complied with St. Thomas' wish.

Our Lord did, however, say (though speaking of those of us who live subsequently, and not of the disciples), "Blessed are they who do not see, and do yet believe." This is our position. The Lord indicates a special blessing upon those who, not seeing, would be able to believe. But we remember that we have testimonies and evidences that St. Thomas did not have. If we had heard that ten men had seen certain things one night, we might have wondered if they had not been in a vision, just as the transfiguration on the Mount was a vision. We might have imagined some dream or some hallucination coming upon them. Here, however, was St. Thomas, a man like a great many of us, hard-headed and practical; but when the proof was given him, when demonstration was made, he recognized that it was not a phantom, but that the Lord stood there before him in a body of flesh. This incident has proved a strengthener to the faith of many of us.

It is quite probable that St. Thomas was not permitted to be present at the first interview for the very purpose that there might be that demonstration, to the intent that it might be easier for some of us to believe. We can readily see that an established faith was all-important to the disciples. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) If the disciples had been in doubt about our Lord's resurrection, they would not have been able to give us clear testimony on the subject, and how would we otherwise have known the facts? Some would have believed that he ascended to heaven and others of us would have thought differently if we had not the positive testimony, the proof. So the Lord purposed that these eleven disciples should be thoroughly convinced. Unless they had had absolute faith in him as the ascended Redeemer and Advocate they would not have been prepared to receive the holy Spirit at Pentecost. And unless they had received the holy Spirit they would not have been fitted for the ministry.

These forty days then seem to be the most important part of our Lord's ministry; for on them depended all the success of the Gospel message which was to be launched not by angels, but by men—these very men to whom he appeared—it was for them to tell what they saw and believed. For them to have lost faith and to have gone back into the ordinary affairs of life would have been contrary to the divine arrangement.

Jesus appeared four times—once to the women on the morning of his resurrection, once later on the same day to two of his disciples who were going to Emmaus; later the same evening to the ten in the upper room; then after a week, this appearance to St. Thomas and the other ten disciples. Some two or three weeks then elapsed, in which they neither saw him nor heard of him. Jesus was giving them some time in which to develop faith. They had these proofs, that he had spirit power to go and come like the wind. But he had not told them what to do, so in spite of all they had seen they thought it best to go back into the fishing business.

This was the moment for which Jesus was waiting. He knew they would have doubts and wonderments, and was on the alert to be invisibly with them to teach them a necessary lesson just as soon as they returned to the fishing business. As a result they did not catch even one fish. None were allowed to go into their net. All night long the disciples toiled in vain.

In the morning Jesus was standing on the shore. They had not seem him for about three weeks, and at first did not recognize him. He told them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. If there were no fish on one side, there would probably not be any on the other side; for a little distance would not make much difference. But they had had such a trying experience during the night that they were willing to do almost anything. While it did not seem reasonable that it would do any good to cast the net just a few feet further away, yet having lost all confidence, they were ready to follow the suggestion of the stranger. So they put the net down, and enclosed a great haul of fish. It was a miracle; for the net was full. But it was nothing remarkable for a spirit being to make this exhibition, this manifestation, of divine power.

By this experience the disciples were taught two great lessons—that without the divine blessing they could not succeed even in the fishing business, the occupation in which they had been engaged all their lives. The second great lesson was that he who had been a fisher of men had the divine power to supply all their needs; that as he had the power to supply the fish, so he had power to supply all other needs. Furthermore, when they got to the shore, he had fish there and had cooked them—he was not dependent upon the fish in the net. Of course we do not understand the power—it was divine power, unlimited power. This experience became to the disciples almost a final demonstration of divine power. They knew it was Jesus, although they did not ask him. He showed them that he had all the while known just what they were doing, and that he had absolute power to give or to withhold blessings from them. It must have been a great strengthener of their faith to realize that he was as able to provide for them in one place as in another, and that they did not need to go back into the world and its pursuits; for he would be with them always, even to the end of the age.—Matthew 28:20.

Subsequently the Lord appeared to his disciples twice more—seven times altogether. Then he ascended up on high. Later he appeared to St. Paul. By these different demonstrations Jesus thoroughly convinced his disciples of two great things; first, that he was no longer dead, that he was alive; secondly, that he had supreme power. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthews 28:18) This great Being was their Master. He had not lost anything, but had gained much in passing into death and then out of it. So they might have great confidence in him, and might go forth to speak of his death, of the fact of his resurrection and of his ascension into God's presence, as manifested by the giving of the holy Spirit. But they would not have been ready to declare any of these things had they not been thoroughly convinced.

We do not think that Jesus reproved St. Thomas for his doubts. It is a great satisfaction to one whose mind happens to be of that particular kind as was St. Thomas'. Some minds require more proof than do others. Undoubtedly the whole church has been blessed by St. Thomas' action at this time. If we had been one of the disciples and had been absent when Jesus first appeared, and had been told of it by the others we would have said, "You are dreaming, gentlemen. In your perplexity and excitement you are telling us a fairy tale." We would wish to be satisfied and to have the sense of touch to prove the matter. Now the Lord gave us this evidence, and it is a great blessing to us.

A POWER POSSESSED BY SPIRIT BEINGS

The evidence of the resurrection of Jesus lay in the fact that there was a person there in that upper room who had the power to come and go like the wind and to demonstrate that he was not dead by any means. That body which St. Thomas and the other disciples saw was not the body crucified and buried in Joseph's tomb, but a materialized body—with the same facial expression, the same hands, the same feet, that the human body of Jesus had. Jesus said that it was flesh, that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." He had both the flesh and the bones there.

St. Thomas and the others could not appreciate how a spirit could materialize a body. In fact, with all that we know, more than eighteen centuries later, we do not understand how it could be. We know, however, that angels appeared like men and could talk, eat and walk. We know that various evil spirit beings appeared in the days of Noah, and sought to dwell on earth as men. The disciples knew this, but they had not thought to apply this to the Lord. They were learning how to apply these things to the Lord—how a spirit could materialize and dematerialize in their presence. This was a matter of education. Subsequently they would come to a more particular understanding of this—when they received the holy Spirit; just as with us. When we come to a better knowledge, in this proportion the holy Spirit has guided our understanding.

We have come to a full ability to believe these matters, although we do not understand them yet; for to understand would be to enter into the matter in a philosophical way and to know how the thing is done. We do not think that the apostles saw the body of our Lord in the resurrection. But what they saw was proof that he was no longer a human being, but a spirit being. To make a body suitable for the occasion was no more of a miracle than were any of the other things connected with the resurrection.

GOD'S ARK IN WICKED HANDS

FEBRUARY 21.—1 SAMUEL 4:1-18.

A CORRUPT PRIESTHOOD—A DEMORALIZED PEOPLE—ATTEMPT TO BRING GOD INTO THE WAR—THE ARK OF THE COVENANT CAPTURED—PUNISHMENT AT THE HANDS OF THEIR ENEMIES—THE SAME PRINCIPLE IN OPERATION TODAY—TRAGIC DEATH OF ELI AND HIS SONS—WHICH NATIONS ARE IN COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

"Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves."—James 1:22.

Some twenty years after God's prediction of the calamities that would befall Eli and his family, the tragedy in this lesson occurred. In all those twenty years, apparently no reformations had taken place—the aged Eli, now ninety-eight years old, had not purged the servants or the service of the Lord. He had allowed matters to continue in the hands of his sons, notwithstanding their continual dishonesty in the things of God and their immorality and pernicious example. Samuel, apparently, may have been absent at the time of this lesson, and perhaps for years before. Wherever he was, we may be sure that he was a true servant of God, and more and more recognized of the people as such.

We are not to overestimate the moral and religious conditions of the people during those twenty years; but we may assume that the evil example of the priests, the sons of Eli, whom he had associated with him in the priestly office, had an injurious effect upon the people—a demoralizing effect. According to God's covenant with the nation, he was bound to reprove them, punish them. A fresh invasion of the Philistines took place. The Israelites went out to meet them in battle and were defeated. In their chagrin, and groping after some help, they looked to God, just as all the nations of Europe today are looking to God for help and praying in vain.

The usual customs under such conditions today are the same as then; namely, an attempt to bring God into the war, an attempt to invoke the assistance of religious symbols, etc. And, indeed, the Israelites had more ground for so doing than have the warring kingdoms of today; for God had declared himself to be the Keeper of Israel, and that they were his special nation, his ward, and that he would protect them as long as they would be loyal to him. On the other hand, the kingdoms of this world have no such divine promise, have no ground for such expectations of divine aid. They are falsely styling themselves Christian kingdoms, "Christendom"; whereas they have neither part nor lot with the Lord. He recognizes no nations except natural Israel of the past and spiritual Israel of the present. "Ye are a holy nation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood, to show forth the praises of him who hath called you from darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

The Israelites doubtless had read how the Ark went before them in the Wilderness journey, how it was in the midst of the River Jordan when the people crossed over dry-shod, and how it was in the procession that marched around Jericho when the walls fell. And so they determined to bring up the Ark of the Lord and put it in the battle with the people of Israel; and thus they thought they would insure victory. Their reasoning, apparently, was that God would not permit the Ark of the Covenant to be injured or to be captured; and hence they would be safe and victory would be bound to come to Israel.

With our mental eye we see the pageant: Here come the Levites, bearing the holy Ark of God, and the two sons of Eli, arrayed as the priests of the Most High, the representatives of God's holiness; and the people, enthused with the thought of victory through the Ark of God, shouted their usual battle-hymn, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee."—Numbers 10:35.

The people forgot that they had been living irreligiously, in violation of their covenant with God; and that that covenant called for punishment upon them at the hand of their enemies. They forgot that the two representative priests by no means represented God and his righteousness—that they were thieves and robbers, garbed as the priests of God; that they were immoral, impure, posing as the representatives of the divine holiness. They forgot that God's blessing was not to be expected under such conditions.

A PRESENT-DAY PARALLEL

And alas! Although we are many centuries removed from their time, we see much of this same principle today—much sham, much pretense, much misrepresentation of God on the part of those who profess to be his representatives. We behold the present war, with the Kaiser of Germany at the head of the Lutheran church; with Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary, the chief son of the Papacy; with King George at the head of the church of England; with the Czar, the "little father" of Russia, the chief representative of the Greek Catholic church—all these marching out to battle, each rallying his soldiers with the thought of God, each treading the precious name of the Prince of Peace into the dust, each bent on the use of the sword for the selfish purpose of promoting the greatness of his empire and its commercial prosperity, and, incidentally, upholding the traditions of the past respecting his authority to establish the kingdom of God upon earth.

Today, as in the days of Eli's sons, the people give a shout as they couple the cause of God with their national projects. Again they forget that the two are entirely separate; that God's cause is under divine direction; and that his cause will prosper best by the permission of a great defeat to all these systems of men, preparing incidentally for the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, after the Armageddon of the Bible shall have humbled the world and made them ready to acclaim the new King Immanuel and his kingdom "the desire of all nations."

Calling upon the name of the Lord and having the Ark of God in battle did not help the Israelites, even as the carrying of the ikons by the Russian soldiers will not give them the victory, or the wearing of the name of God upon their belts give the victory to the Germans, or the carrying of the Cross of St. George give victory to the armies of the British.

There was a great slaughter and a scattering of the forces of the Israelites. The two sons of Eli were slain. The Ark of God was captured. A swift runner from the army brought the sad intelligence to Shiloh, where Eli as judge sat upon the high seat in the gate, anxiously wondering, fearfully remembering the twenty-year-before prediction of disaster. The runner reported to Eli that the battle had gone against the Israelites, that his two sons were slain, and concluded by telling that the Ark of the Lord had also been captured by the Philistines.

ISRAEL DIFFERENT FROM OTHER NATIONS

Eli heard all with equanimity until the last sentence. When he learned that his precious treasure, for which he was the guardian by divine appointment, had been taken by the Philistines, the poor man fell over in a faint, his chair toppled, his neck was broken. Although faithful at heart until death at ninety-eight, he, nevertheless, is not without reproof in that he neglected his family and neglected to see that the work entrusted to him was not interfered with by those of his own household. His loyalty to God was not sufficiently great to hinder him from shirking his responsibility. In his character was too much of the "peace at any price," not enough of that courage which is prepared to die for righteousness' sake.

The lesson taught to God's covenant people, Israel, the Lord next sent chastisements upon the Philistines, so that they were glad to return the Ark to the people of God. Some are inclined to make light of the declaration that the Philistines were plagued with mice and with hemorrhoids so long as they had the Ark with them; and that when the Ark had been restored to the Israelites, these plagues were removed. We have no reason, however, to doubt that the Philistines had cause for the realization that these were special plagues, and the Scriptures seem to uphold the thought that they were of the Lord.

This does not authorize us in supposing that every kind of plague today is of the Lord—that pestilences, etc., are special punishments of God. We must remember, when considering this matter, that the nation of Israel, and everything pertaining to it, was in a special covenant relationship with God and under divine supervision. Whoever touched Israel or any of the things pertaining to the typical system was to that extent adverse to the Lord, his cause, his interests, and this could be done only by the Lord's permission; and when the Lord wished to bring back the Ark, or deliver his people from such circumstances, it was for him to bring to pass conditions necessary to that end.

There is no such condition of things prevailing today. The nation of Israel is temporarily cut off from the divine protection which was with them—until the full number from the Gentiles shall have been brought into Spiritual Israel. Then all Israel will be recovered from their blindness and their alienation from God, as it is written: "This is my covenant with them when I shall have taken away their sins."—Romans 11:26-32.

The only people or nation now in covenant relationship with God, according to the Bible, is spiritual Israel, "a holy

nation, a peculiar people." And, as respects spiritual Israel, their interests are spiritual; and the divine promises do not guarantee them earthly blessings and protection, but rather the reverse—persecution and opposition. God's guarantee to spiritual Israel, however, is that all the adversities of the present life which he permits to come to them will work out to their eternal spiritual welfare, if they are rightly exercised thereby.

CONFESSION OF SIN, FORGIVENESS, VICTORY

FEBRUARY 28.—1 SAMUEL 7:3-17.

SAMUEL PROPHET AND JUDGE—HIS INFLUENCE FOR GOOD—ISRAEL BECAME PENITENT—A CONVENTION AT MOUNT MIZPEH—THE WATCH TOWER—FASTING AND PRAYER—GOD'S FAVOR RETURNED—PHILISTINES REBUKED—ISRAEL BLESSED UNDER SAMUEL'S JUDGESHIP—A CIRCUIT JUDGE.

"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—1 Samuel 7:12.

Samuel the prophet might serve Eli the priest, but he could not become his successor, because not of the priestly family. It is probable, therefore, that, as he reached maturity, he found other service; but there is a blank in the record of twenty years at least. The intimation, however, is that he was faithful to God and to the interests of his people, and that the people trusted him as a servant of God. We may be sure, therefore, that he was not idle, but engaged in some good work. Quite possibly he engaged himself in instructing the people respecting their wrong conditions, the permission of idolatry amongst them, their neglect of God, etc.

Our lesson introduces him to us as the leader of the hour, when the people had become thoroughly aroused to a sense of their unholiness, their need of God, and their need of mutual help if they would come back into relationship with God. Having brought the people to this proper condition of mind, the Prophet Samuel appointed a general meeting at a small mountain called Mizpeh; that is, Watch Tower. They came in considerable numbers and with hearts bowed down with grief in recognition that they were sinners, and that therefore they had been foreigners—out of divine favor. They came seeking God, and he was found of them.

A GREAT REFORMATION EFFECTED

The Prophet Samuel put the matter before the people in plain, distinct terms, saying, "If ye do return unto the Lord will all your hearts, then put away the strange Gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." Samuel was warranted in telling the people that they would be delivered from the power of the Philistines; because this was God's standing agreement with them by the covenant he entered into with them; namely, that if they would obey his laws and be loyal to him, he would be their God and they would be his people, and he would guide their interests to their highest welfare, both as a nation and as individuals; but if they would not obey his statutes and be loyal to him, then he would deliver them into the hand of their enemies and punish them seven times. God was keeping his part of the covenant; it was Israel that had failed, and Samuel was properly bringing the matter to their attention and urging repentance.

"Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served Jehovah only." Baalim was the plural name for Baal. The word Baal signifies overseer, caretaker. The Israelites had been distinctly forewarned not to make any kind of idols, and to keep themselves separate from all idols to such an extent that they might not even make an image of their own God, Jehovah. He would not have any symbols before his people, but have them worship him in spirit and in truth. But all around them were the Canaanites ,whom they had not had faith and obedience to drive out of the land. These Canaanites had the Baal idols in all their towns, and some had them in their homes and trusted in them as protective genii.

Ashtaroth is the plural for Ashtoreth, a female deity—the same known to the Babylonians as Ishtar and to the Greeks as Astarte. She was the goddess of fertility and the sexual relations; and connected with her worship were many licentious services supposed to promote fertility—the propagation of the human species. If Samuel's work of twenty years reached this harvest where the whole people of Israel decided to put away their Ashtaroth of gods and to worship and serve Jehovah only, he certainly accomplished much. We may be sure, also, that some human agency was connected with so great an outward manifestation. Such reformations do not come by chance, nor are they miraculous.

Samuel prayed for the people of Israel; "and they drew water and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord." The confession of sin was not only credible to the people as a manifestation of their honesty and sincerity, but it was appropriate that they should do this when asking the God whom they had offended to receive them back again into covenant relationship with himself. The poet has said that confession is good for the soul, and surely all have proven it so. It served to commit them. The humility which was necessary to the making of such confession would be profitable in respect to their character-building.

The water poured out may be viewed from various angles. One suggestion is that it represented the truth which they could not gainsay, could not take back, even as water spilled upon the ground cannot be recovered. Another suggestion is that as the water was drawn from the depth of the earth, so their confession came from the depths of their hearts. Another is that it represented their vows of faithfulness to the Lord, which would be as irrevocable as water poured out.

A LESSON FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

"And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh." That is to say, as a judge, a counselor, he gave advice, gave decision in respect to their affairs, disputes, proper course of conduct, right and wrong on any subject, etc. Thus the nation of Israel was making a new start; and as a people were more drawn together than at any time in their history from the days of Joshua onward. But, as though it were a trial of their faith, at this very time, while they were resolving on the course of righteousness, their enemies, the Philistines, having heard of the gathering, sought to nip the rebellion in the bud, and came against them with an army of considerable size.

The Israelites had not come together for battle, but for prayer; nevertheless they were probably more or less armed. But they felt themselves quite unprepared to meet the Philistine hosts. And they said unto Samuel, "Cease not to cry unto Jehovah our God for us, that he save us out of the hand of the Philistines." They were learning to look for help in the right direction. This cry coming to the Lord after they had abandoned their idols and had vowed to be loyal to Jehovah, put them in a very different attitude toward him from that of twenty years previous, when they called for the Ark of God to lead them in battling against the Philistines without any reformation of character, without repentance for sins.

Is there not a lesson here for all of God's people? Is it not as true today as it ever was that it is vain for the Lord's people to call upon the Lord for assistance and blessing while they are living in sin, in violation of their covenant and its obligations? The first lesson of all, then, for those who realize their being in sin is repentance, and definite vows to the Lord respecting faithfulness in petition to him for his mercy unto them. Those who thus come to the Lord now, as Christians, under the Headship of our Lord Jesus Christ, are sure to have divine mercy and "grace to help in every time of need."

Our Philistines that come upon us and enslave us are our passions and weaknesses, and the oppositions of the world and the adversary. These are our foes, and against these only divine power can enable us to fight a good fight and come off victorious.

In response to the cry of the people, Samuel the prophet offered to the Lord a sacrifice—a lamb of the first year. He knew it not, but it was a type of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Beside this typical sacrifice, Samuel cried to the Lord on behalf of his people, and the Lord heard him. So with all that stand beside the great antitypical sacrifice, and in the name and merit of that sacrifice, as people of God in covenant relationship with him—having put away sins and weaknesses to the best of our ability, we may be sure of divine help, deliverance.

SIGNAL MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE FAVOR

While yet the offering was upon the altar, the voice of the approaching hosts of the Philistines was heard. How would God assist his people? How could they hope for deliverance against the Philistine hosts? Would they in fear scatter or would God's power to help be manifest? The deliverance came in the shape of a great, violent, sudden storm. Going hastily, it swept down the hill Mizpeh, in the faces of the approaching hosts. They turned their backs against the violent storm; and the Israelites perceiving the opportunity, rushed onward with

the storm, pursuing the Philistines and driving them before them, and thus gaining a great victory. The place of the victory was the very spot where, twenty years before, the Ark of the Lord had been captured by the Philistines. Samuel there set a stone as a pillar and monument, and called it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."—Verse 12.

So with Christians in their victories under the Lord's assistance; when by the Lord's grace they gain victories they should set up memorials or monuments in their minds, in their hearts, and not pass these blessings by or forget that the victories were gained by help from on high. Every Christian, therefore, should have his Ebenezers, his monuments of victory, as it were, of divine assistance over his foes, the world, the flesh and the adversary and he should rejoice in these. This sentiment has come down to us in the words of a beautiful hymn, familiar to nearly all who read the English language:

"Here I'll raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at Home."

PROPER AND IMPROPER JUDGMENTS

The record is that Samuel continued to be a judge, an interpreter of the divine law, a counselor to his people, "all the days of his life." The Israelites had accepted God's laws, and had agreed to abide by its decisions. Whoever, therefore, they would have confidence in as an interpreter of the divine law, they, in proper condition of heart, would be ready to obey his rulings, his judgments. Spiritual Israelites similarly have come into covenant relationship with God, and have bound themselves to seek to know and to do the will of God and not their own wills. Hence whoever may be the person of opportunity who can show "an Israelite indeed" the mind of the Lord in any manner, he becomes his counselor, the Lord's mouthpiece to him; thus all the people of God assist one another to judge themselves, to build each other up in the most holy faith, to guide each other to know and to do the will of the Lord.

This office is not left to ministers, to priests, but is open to all the Lord's people; for St. Peter declares all the Lord's people are priests—"Ye are a royal priesthood." True, these priests have not entered into their royalty, nor yet have they entered fully upon their priestly office. These glorious offices belong especially to the future, when by virtue of the resurrection change, these priests who are now sacrificing, will be priests in glory, reigning with Christ and judging the world—assisting the world, counseling the world, instructing the world regarding God's will and helping them to know and do that will.

The royal priesthood are to remember that their judging in the present time is not a judging of the hearts, but merely a judging of the conduct. As respects the hearts, they are informed of the Lord that they are not competent to judge; and hence the words of the Apostle Paul, "Judge nothing before the time." The time for the judging of the hearts, when this work will be committed to the church, will be after that which is perfect shall have come, after the resurrection change shall have made us like our Redeemer and qualified therefore to read the hearts of mankind, and to judge a righteous judgment, a merciful judgment, a sympathetic judgment, a helpful one.

The only judging which the people of God may now do for and toward each other, is that which the Lord represented when he said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Men do not gather grapes off thorn bushes or figs off thistles. A good spring will not send forth bitter water. We are, therefore, to judge ourselves as to whether or not our conduct is in harmony with the principles of righteousness; and we may similarly assist in judging one another as respects outward conduct, leaving the judgment of the heart to the individual himself and to the Lord.

The Prophet Samuel established a new order of things, which we see was the outgrowth of his reformation work amongst the people of God, his nation. He did not do as others before him had done—have his place of residence, to which all the people must go to ask is advice, his counsel, his judgment; but he introduced the circuit judge system, and went from place to place holding a court, not so much to condemn anybody, but rather to advise those who desired advice. Thus the nation of Israel began to be cemented as one people, and to realize that their interests were in common; and that all of their interests were bound up with God, his law, his covenant with them, and the interpretation of these through such agents as the Lord might send to them—Samuel the prophet being one of these.

RETURN OF THE CHURCH FROM THE WILDERNESS

A wilderness condition is one of separation from the blessings of civilization; it is a cut-off condition, a separation from the world. In the case of the church, we read that the Lord provided her with two wings, that she might go into the wilderness 1260 symbolic days, or years. Apparently she went into the wilderness condition of her own accord, and became voluntarily an outcast from the privileges and advantages of the world's society; she underwent a general ostracism or separation.

In the account of the typical Atonement day sacrifices we read that the scapegoat went into the wilderness, but it did not go voluntarily; it was sent away. In the antitype the faithful, consecrated class go into the wilderness voluntarily, while the others will go into it of compulsion. The two classes will have similar experiences, however. The experiences of the church have been tribulations, brought on by reason of their loyalty to the Lord and the truth. The Lord's people can be in this wilderness condition even while surrounded by all the affairs of the world. We are separate from the world; we are in the world, but not of it—isolated.

In the Book of Revelation we read that the church fled for 1260 years into the wilderness, and that during a similar period of time a great system had control of affairs. This period, we understand, began in 539 A. D. and ended with the year 1799. It was a period of ostracism, called the wilderness condition, but not necessarily of persecution. One might go into the wilderness condition and not receive persecution—not be shot, not be hanged, or anything like that. Hence the wilderness condition does not include the thought of persecution, but merely of separation.

In figurative language the city represents honor, distinction and prominence in the world, while the wilderness signifies the reverse condition—that of being ignored, ostracised, etc. During the 1260 symbolic days the church was in the condition of ostracism. The governments paid no attention to her; but on the other hand, they gave a great deal of attention to the great system which exalted itself and became "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth"—Mystic Babylon.

THE RETURN FROM THE WILDERNESS

At the end of this period, beginning with 1799, the proper conception of the church was more nearly recognized by the world in general, when the power of Papacy was broken, when the pope was carried a prisoner to France. Then the nations realized that they had been more or less mistaken as to the pope being Christ's representative. From that time on the Papacy, as a great system, has not had the persecuting power, but has been compelled to vie with others. The Baptist denomination, the Methodist denomination, and others, have prospered during this period, and the world has recognized them in the same degree as it has recognized Papacy.

The Papacy did not go into the wilderness, however; but Protestantism stepped out of the wilderness condition, to be more particularly recognized by the people and by the government. This has continued for quite a while and the Bible has been more generally recognized than before. Shortly after 1799, Bible Societies began to be organized. The Bible was brought into great prominence. Old and New Testaments, God's two witnesses, were exalted to heaven. Those who advocated the Bible came out into the full light. Bible students and Bible study became more approved than ever before. Bibles were printed and everybody favored Bible Study.

There is no Scriptural declaration that the church will go back into the wilderness condition. Our reference to a second wilderness experience is founded upon the symbolic picture of our day that is given to us in the experiences of Elijah the Prophet. Elijah, representing the true church of God, had been a true prophet for some time. He was unpopular with Queen Jezebel, who had influenced King Ahab against him. The King threatened Elijah's life and he fled to the wilderness for 1260 days, or three and a half years. This was symbolical of the 1260 years during which the church remained in the wilderness condition.

At the close of the 1260 days in Elijah's experience, he returned from the wilderness ,and made a great demonstration. He made an exhibition of the priests of Baal, who had been favored by Queen Jezebel and by King Ahab. This manifestation resulted in a great exaltation of the Word of God, and

a great downfall of the priests of Baal. From that time they were obliged to hold themselves in seclusion. The people said, "Jehovah is God."

We understand that all this particularly represents how the true church, in 1799, manifested itself before the kings of the world, and stood up for God and the Bible. Elijah represented the true church; Jezebel represented the Papal System and other systems closely related to her; Ahab represented the government; and the people of Israel represented the world. The Bible was forced upon Jezebel and Ahab, and everybody. The two witnesses were exalted because the people took notice of them.

ELIJAH'S SECOND WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

Coming back to the picture: Queen Jezebel represented her daughters, her kind, her family. The Prophet Elijah represented the true people of God in the present time. The Queen did not persecute him, but threatened him; and again he fled into the wilderness—not for a specified time, however. The people in general were not under the same kind of restraint as previously. The priests of Baal never regained their influence. Elijah went again into the wilderness and was there nourished for a time; it was not the previous nourishment of the 1260 days by the ravens, but an especially provided food for a time.

To our understanding this food especially provided for Elijah, after his experience with the priests of Baal and after his fleeing from Jezebel, represents the special Message that is now feeding the people of God. After Elijah had reached the wilderness, there was an inclination on his part to feel discouraged; and he said, "Ah, Lord God! "—this signifying his discouragement. But the Lord strengthened him and gave his a special food, in the strength of which he went to Mt. Horeb. This mountain represents the kingdom of God, the Messianic kingdom. And we believe that by this spiritual food we are now brought to the time when the kingdom is to be established.

When Elijah got to Mt. Horeb the Lord gave him three witnesses. (1 Kings 19:1-18) The wind rending the mountains represents the present war. The great earthquake symbolically represents a social revolution, the like of which was never before in the world, and which we believe is due to come very soon. This will not come as soon as the war begins, but the war might continue while the earthquake is on. This was not all. The third demonstration was a great fire, which consumed everything before it. This represents wide-spread anarchy, which will prevail in the world, following the social revolution. Then after the fire Elijah heard the "still, small voice," representing the divine power, which will bring the blessings to the world.

INTERESTING LETTERS

REPLY TO A CRITIC OF PRESENT EXPECTATIONS

DEAR BROTHER:—

Your first letter was unanswered, not because of any discourtesy, but through pity. But now that you have written again respecting the disappointment of my expectation mentioned Nov. 29, 1911, that "within three years I shall have been joined to the Bridegroom," I have concluded to answer your letter, conceiving that after you have read my reply, my past, present and future faith may not seem so distressingly funny to you.

Twenty years ago you and I believed in infant baptism; in the divine right of the clergy to administer that baptism; that baptism was necessary to escape eternal torment; that God is love; that God created and continues to create billions of beings in his likeness who will spend the countless ages of eternity in the strangling fumes of burning sulphur, pleading in vain for one drop of water to relieve their agonies; we believed in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; we believed that we should be followers of God as dear children; in baptizing our infants we believed that God saved some and did not save others, or else believed in the salvation of all infants, except those poor unfortunates to whose parents the Gospel had not been preached; for such, we believed, no salvation was provided outside of baptism into some one of the hundreds of sects into which Christianity is divided.

We believed that after a man dies, he is alive; we believed that Jesus Christ never died; that he could not die; that no ransom was ever paid or ever will be paid; that Jehovah God and Christ Jesus his Son are one and the same person; that the holy Spirit is a person; that one plus one, plus one, equal one; that when Jesus hung on the cross and said, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me," He was merely talking to himself; that he was raised in the flesh; that he still bears, and will forever bear, his scars; that he alone of all mankind will have to go scarred and marred throughout eternity; that he will come again in the flesh; that the day of judgment is a day of horror; that the literal earth is to be burned up with literal fire; that all human beings who are saved become angels; that Paradise is heaven; that the crucified thief became an angel the day he died and went to heaven; that Christ did not become an angel, but was raised from the dead as a man three days later than the thief, but did not ascend to heaven until forty days afterward; that all the ancient worthies went to heaven when they died, including David; that present kingdoms are part of Christ's kingdom; that the devil has been away off somewhere in an unlocated hell, instead of exercising dominion over the kingdoms of this earth; that the Antichrist is to be a literal man; that sectarianism is a good thing and will be perpetuated forever; that one can be born of the Spirit while he is still in the flesh; that a resurrection from the dead is impossible because none are dead; that it merely means in the case of the saints the taking back of the poor bodies that they had, in place of the perfectly good ones they secured when they died.

We believed that sanctification means sinlessness, not self-sacrificing devotion to the will of God; that the expression "bride of Christ" means nothing; because everybody who is saved will be the bride of Christ; that the expression high calling means nothing, because everybody who is saved will be saved to the high calling; that the "prize of the high calling" therefore means nothing; that the Time of the End will never come in your day, in my day, nor in anybody else's day; that present running to and fro, means nothing; that there will never be any end of the "Times of the Gentiles"; that there will never be any special "Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation"; that there will be no "restitution of all things"; that the Jubilee arrangements signify nothing; that the "abomination of desolation" signifies nothing; that there never was and never will be a great falling away; that there never was and never will be a great Mother Apostate church, and she never had and never will have any daughters; that the expression "royal priesthood" means nothing, because everybody who is saved will be of the priesthood; that there can never be a second death, not even a first one; that a human soul once born, lives on forever; that the Tabernacle signifies nothing; that there is no witness to the Lord in the land of Egypt; that the Memorial Supper can be properly observed any old time; that the Christian Sabbath is not a rest of faith, but merely a formal observance of one day in seven; that the literal heavens will be literally rolled together as a literal scroll; that at that time men will pray for literal mountains to fall on top of them.

I praise God for the day that brought present truth to my door. It was so wholesome, so refreshing to mind and heart, that I quickly left the humbug and claptrap of the past and was used of God to also open your blinded eyes. We rejoiced in the truth together, working side by side for fifteen years. The Lord greatly honored you as a mouthpiece; I never knew anybody who could make the follies of Babylon look so ridiculous. In your letter you ask, "What next?" Ah, now comes the pity of it! The next thing is that you permit your heart to become embittered against the one whose labors of love and whose blessings from on high brought the truth to both our hearts. You went out, and took several of the sheep with you.

I am reliably informed that when Billy Sunday was in your city you were one of the most prominent workers for "the cause." I am reliably informed also that you are now serving as superintendent of a Sunday School in the denomination from which you withdrew when you accepted present truth. You either believe the foregoing "confession of faith," or you don't believe it. If you don't believe it, and are helping to boost the organizations that do believe it, then Doc. Cook, the discoverer (?) of the North Pole, should enlist as your pupil. If you do not believe it, and admit, as you must, that you got all your light on these and thousands of other subjects from Brother Russell, then, by comparison, the boy who wished that his father would die so that he could have his jackknife, should be considered a model of gratitude and loyalty and faithfulness; and his name should be handed down to posterity as a shining example of the way we should act toward our benefactors.

On the contrary, if you have returned to your belief of the

foregoing "faith," you must admit that it is something you once believed and once vomited forth, and like the Scriptural dog, you have returned to your vomit; I hope you like it.

Probably I look ridiculous to you because I did not go to heaven, October 1st, 1914, but you don't look ridiculous to me—oh no!

With ten of the greatest nations on earth writhing in their death agonies, it seems to me a particularly inopportune time to seek to ridicule the man, and the only man, who for forty years has taught that the Times of the Gentiles would end in 1914.

If you believe these stupid and worse than childish blunders of the past and seek to revivify them, you have a worse job on your hands than Christ had when he raised Lazarus. Pastor Russell's teachings have killed them so completely that they are in a far worse condition than Lazarus was when he had been dead four days.

I presume that when Zedekiah struck Micaiah upon the cheek and ridiculed the latter's confidence in the Lord's message he thought it was really funny, and still more so when Micaiah warned him that he would soon attempt to hide himself unsuccessfully from the Syrians in his inner chamber. I doubt, however, whether Zedekiah considered it so funny shortly afterward when he saw the armies of the Syrians in front of his house, and especially when he heard them coming up stairs.—1 Kings 22.

If this letter shall awaken you to your true condition, I shall be glad. If it does not, it will not be necessary for you to write to me again; for I shall consider it a hopeless task.

With best wishes, I remain, C. J. WOODWORTH.

MANY HEARTS RECEIVING COMFORT

W. T. B. & T. SOC'Y, DEAR FRIENDS:—

I think you should know of the blessing of the Lord on the service last week, and in making calls on those who handed in their names at Brother Rutherford's meeting. I never saw such interest! The sale of books was reasonably good—450 (all but 50 of which are delivered)—sold in four days. The fine class of business men represented was quite exceptional, although every week there are some.

Three young ladies from the Y. W. C. A. bought the books, and one gives good evidence of coming fully into the truth in a very short time. A piano dealer said, "This is no denominational work, is it? I have no use for denominations. The man's theory is worth investigation." A lawyer said, "That man is a wonder! I never read my Bible, but I am going to begin now. Every reasoning person ought to have these books—I am going to read every word in them."

A merchant remarked, "This is the greatest reformation movement we ever had; we must keep it going." He sent to me twice for more books for his friends; and he is a man who had thrown all religion aside.

A doctor I called on said, "I was interested to hear he was a Baptist; so was I, and I had the same experience he had—threw the whole thing over in disgust—and I was a preacher." He was glad to examine the work. The cloth books were not fine enough for him; he got the leather-bound.

A very fine office man said, "I will read every moment I can get. Of course, I take it for granted that these books are along the lines of that lecture." He ordered a set.

It would take a book to tell the rest! But it is such a joy to see some of the "refuge of lies" being swept away, confidence in Babylon on the wane, and many hearts comforted.

With love and prayers for you all, and asking a continued interest in your petitions, I am, by his grace,

Your Sister, CHARLOTTE WHITE.

"A PRAYER OF CONSECRATION"

Realizing that I must draw nearer to God to be kept in this hour of trial now upon the whole world, I have prayed more; and I find the following form very helpful; I therefore call it

"THE PRAYER OF THE CONSECRATED":

"Dear heavenly Father, reverently, and in the name of Jesus, I approach thy throne of grace to renew my consecration vows today. Not content with having made my consecration years ago, nor even yesterday, I renew it today, and present to thee my body and all its powers, my heart and all its affections. I give to thee, willingly and gladly, everything I possess, to be wholly thine—today. I would not withhold from thee one single thing.

"Gracious and loving Father and dear Lord Jesus, come in all your fulness into my heart and life; take full possession and reign there supreme, without a rival today. Dear Lord Jesus, my glorious High Priest and Head to thy body, the church, continue to offer me today upon God's holy altar of sacrifice, and until the sacrifice is completed in death."

I have found that doing this daily I have been greatly enriched and blessed spiritually.

Yours, in his love and service, W. J. THORN.

Isa. 41:10; Num. 6:24-26.

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PRESENT DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF THE SAINTS

"Cry aloud and spare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the House of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God. They ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God."—Isaiah 58:1, 2.

We understand that the Lord, through the Prophet Isaiah, is here describing the condition of the nominal people of God. These words probably had an application in the Prophet's day, but we think they have a special application in our day. If we should view the words as a general statement, applicable at any time, it would seem to have reference to some who are truly the Lord's people and also to the House of Jacob in general. The prophet speaks of certain transgressions of God's people, errors, and of sins of the House of Jacob (Natural Israel)—especially grievous transgressions.

Applying this to the present day, we would understand that the Lord's people are those who are in covenant relationship with God, his real people, and no others. Those in covenant relationship with God are comparatively a small number. The great mass of professed people of God have gotten into many transgressions of the divine will and law, many of them quite ignorantly following blind leaders of the blind, following creeds of the darkest past. The term "the House of Jacob," however, is a distinguishing term, referring exclusively to the Jews, God's ancient covenant people.

The Lord's people of the present time, those who have the light of truth as it now shines out from his Word, should, as they have suitable opportunity, point out to Christendom of today, and especially to those who are the professed people of God, their error, show them where they have deviated from God's Word, where their course is not in harmony with the Golden Rule, etc. Moreover, if they have favorable opportunity, they might point out to the Jews the reasons why they are in their present cast-off condition. But it would not be well to go about berating them, or berating anybody.

Very little good is done by such a course. The truth itself is to be the sword. It is a sharp two-edged sword, even the Word of God, The work that any of us could do aside from the Word of God would be but bungling work; whereas "The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." We are to "cry aloud, and spare not," to point out what the Scriptures have to say—on proper occasions. This does not mean to insult people. God's ambassadors have no commission to insult any one. But with gracious words we may, nevertheless, point to the conditions of today, the dangers that are now before the world, and the proper position to be taken by those who would wholly follow the Lord.

A FORM OF GODLINESS WITHOUT ITS POWER

The words of the text under consideration are along the same line as the words of the Prophet Isaiah in Chapter 29:13, quoted by our Lord. There the Prophet declares: "This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me"; "but," as the Master rendered the following words (Matthew 15:9), "in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

The translation of V. 2 of our text is not quite so clear as perhaps might be. The thought seems to be: They apparently seek me daily, apparently delight to know my ways. They build churches with high steeples and gorgeous appointments, at great cost. Many churches have imposing images of the saints or great paintings which make a fine outward appearance. They have rich, melodious bells chiming out sweet hymns; such as "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "Rock of Ages," etc. They have well-trained choirs to sing anthems. They have highly educated ministers who are gifted orators and deliver eloquent dissertations. Outwardly, they have a wonderful zeal for righteousness; it would seem on the surface that they are doing well. They appoint an annual

Thanksgiving Day and take up large collections for the poor; they pay large salaries to their preachers; they raise money for missions. It is very much as it was in our Lord's day, at his first advent, when he said, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of Gehenna than yourself"; he is far worse than before they touched him.—Matthew 23:15.

There is great zeal shown for the traditions of men, for the propagation of men's theories, for the advancement of denominational interests, for attracting the world by varied and numerous devices, in order to gain their influence and their financial assistance. For instance, Thanksgiving Day was set apart in the early history of New England. Long ago it became a custom in the United States to have the last Thursday in November appointed as a day of thanksgiving to God for the harvest of the year. The Governor of the State of Massachusetts first took it up; then the Governor of another State followed; then another; then it was taken up by the President of the United States. Finally it became the custom for the President first to make the appointment every year, to be followed by a proclamation by each of the State Governors, making the day thus a legal holiday, when banks and places of business generally would be closed that the people might be free to meet for praise and thanksgiving to God for the blessings of the year. And the custom still persists. Now this might sound to people of other nations to whom it would be told as if the people of the United States were a set of saints. These nations might say, It was not sufficient that the general Government of the United States should make such appointment, but each State makes such appointment; and they do it every year.

As a matter of fact, if the President of the United States were an infidel he would be expected to follow the custom and make the same proclamation. Or whether the Governor of a State were a Catholic or a Protestant or an atheist, he would be expected to do likewise. It has become a custom, just as the hands of a clock go around. But very few of the people think of the day in any other light than as a pleasant holiday, when they can enjoy a fine dinner and have a good time generally, Very little attention—in fact, none—is paid by the great majority to the real feature, of thanksgiving to God.

It is the same with other customs in other nations of the world. If we were in a Mohammedan country, we would see, at twelve o'clock, every Mohammedan, no matter what he was doing, stop immediately for a moment of prayer to Allah. One who did not know might think from this that the Mohammandans were a most saintly people, who would be very honest and upright in all their dealings; better keep your eye open, for all that. So a great deal that we have everywhere today is a mere mechanical form, an outward display—a form of godliness without its power.

PATENT FACTS IN CHRISTENDOM TODAY

In our text the Prophet was declaring that God's true children should lift up their voice and cry aloud, and tell God's professed people their transgressions. The implication seems to be that there is a very special need of public expression on the matter of calling attention to the fact that there is a great deal of hypocrisy practiced in the name of religion. If we consider the British people or the Russians or the Germans, they all have very strict religious laws. They used to be even more strict—so strict that we who proclaim present truth would not have been permitted to live there; so strict that we would have been in danger of our lives. Yet how many of the people of these countries really serve God and follow the instructions of his Word as given to the children of the Lord? Which of these governments in its dealings with other nations has followed or is now following the Golden Rule taught by the Savior? What does history, past and present, show along this line?

It is not now considered necessary or proper to cry aloud in the streets—the public are no longer ignorant. All these things of which we speak are criticized in the newspapers and elsewhere. As to religious intolerance, nearly all denominations have done their share in persecuting others. But it does not seem that there is any more heart-loyalty today than formerly, even though violent persecution is now seldom practised. If we have the right conception of the matter, only about one-tenth of all the ministers have any faith in the Bible as the Word of God. If that is the case, they are simply living on a high moral plane, though we do not know that this is true of ministers any more than of the world in general. But there is a great deal of religious formality. Those one hundred and eighty thousand ministers still take their texts from the Bible, as they formerly did, but they merely sanction those features of the divine revelation which they think comport well with Higher Criticism and general intelligence. It would seem that the Lord through the Prophet is referring to these conditions.

We do not understand that we should cry out in any unseemly manner—not go to the churches and cry aloud. Those in the churches have a legal right to meet there, and to be as honest as they please or as hypocritical as they please. Neither would it be seemly to go along the streets crying aloud. There is a more fitting and effective way of sounding the alarm.

As a notable instance of the present attitude of the nominal church ministry, we cite the case of the Rev. Dr. Aked. Our mention of this is not a divulging of any private matter; for Dr. Aked took it out of the personal list himself, by publishing the matter in the newspapers. Not long ago this minister disproved to his own satisfaction the virgin-birth of our Lord Jesus and made light of the whole matter. Rev. Mr. Aked is a very able man—stands high with the people and with the colleges and with the ministers. There is a branch of the Federation of the Christian churches in San Francisco, and the Rev. Mr. Aked was chosen as President. Some one attacked Rev. Mr. Aked through the newspapers and said that he should be "churched," "unfrocked," etc., for his statements. Dr. Aked said that he thought everybody understood his position. He offered his resignation as President of the Federation of Churches. The man who thought that he should be called to account for his statements was treated as the offender, and Rev. Aked was requested to resume the presidency. Yet this minister publicly declared that he did not believe one word of the story of the Redemption of mankind—did not believe that Jesus was ever a superhuman being; and the fact that he was supported in his position by his fellow-ministers, with but very few exceptions, proves that the body of the ministry today have sadly fallen, and are "blind leaders of the blind."

KINGDOM WORK THIS SIDE THE VEIL

We are not surprised at these conditions; for long ago they were foretold in the Word of God. We were assured that our day would witness the fulfilment of the prophecies along these lines. Wherever we look, we witness the disintegration of the present order, whether we view the conditions from a social or religious or a financial standpoint. The lease of power to the kingdoms of this world has expired. It was foretold by the Prophet Daniel that "in the days of these kings," before their utter overthrow, the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which should smite and break in pieces all the kingdoms of men, the beastly kingdoms of Daniel's dream. When these kingdoms would be given to "the people of the saints of the Most High," they were to "smite them in pieces as a potter's vessel." This intimates that in some sense of the word the Lord will take possession of these before they have been completely overthrown; that some of the kingdoms represented in the Gentile image will be remaining at that time.

What time, then, is signified by the expression "in the days of these kings," when the kingdom of God was to be set up in power? To our understanding the first step in the setting up of this kingdom was the raising of the sleeping saints of the Gospel age, which we believe was in the spring of 1878. Then began the glorification of the church. The work of setting up the kingdom has, we understand, been progressing from that date, and is now merely lacking the last members of the church class. When these shall have taken their places as members of the church in glory, the kingdom will be fully set up.

This does not signify, that there may not be a part of the kingdom work begun while some of the members of Christ are still in the flesh. Indeed some Scriptures seem to imply that there will be a kingdom work done this side the veil, while a work of still greater magnitude and authority is progressing on the other side of the veil. We read, "Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud upon their beds." This seems to imply, as we have mentioned before, that there is a special work to be done while these saints still have beds, while they are in a condition of repose—not "tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine," but fully at rest in God's great plan. The Scripture goes on to say that they have a two-edged sword in their hands—this is the Word of God. They use it as the sword of the Spirit. This would not be true of them on the other side of the veil. They would have no use for a sword there. The Scriptures also declare that the high-sounding praises of God are upon their lips. This, too, seems to be applicable to those this side the veil.

The final phrase, "to execute the judgments written," would seem to imply that there would be something for the saints on this side of the veil to do in connection with the execution of the judgments upon the nations. As to just what this means, we have not yet fully learned. But we see nothing here to conflict with the thought that the Lord's kingdom may be properly understood to have begun operations and that the present smiting of the nations is under kingdom control. The fact that some of the members of the kingdom class are still in the flesh does not militate at all against this thought. We see the kingdoms of this world now being dashed to pieces, and we are expecting to see the process continued until they are completely ground to powder. They shall become as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind shall carry them away. Then shall they be found no more at all.—Daniel 2:35.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD SET UP

Because certain important things are to be accomplished, we see that God is permitting what to others might seem to be purely human devilishness. For a wise purpose he permits this reign of lawlessness, this condition which evokes universal odium. Our thought is that we should look for still further evidences day by day that the Gentile Times have ended, and that God's kingdom has begun its work. We are expecting to see multiplied proofs of the kingdom power, though the world will not recognize it as such until it is manifested in the flaming fire of anarchy, which is still further along. The present step is the war of the nations. The next step will be Socialism—an attempted Socialism—among the people. Then the third step, anarchy, will gradually come on. When this symbolic fire shall prevail, then the world will realize what we are trying to tell them now; namely, that God's kingdom is taking control, and that these various demonstrations are evidences that our Lord is taking his great power. But the many will not begin to see until the flaming fire is revealed. When we endeavor to tell them now they will not receive it, but they will be thoroughly convinced when they see the destructive fire of anarchy.

It was merely during the interval between the destruction of the kingdom of Israel and the setting up of the kingdom of the heavens that the opportunity was given to these Gentile kingdoms to see what they could do toward establishing a righteous government on earth. Now the time has come for God's kingdom to displace them; but they will not willingly resign their crowns and scepters; they are in defiance. Therefore force is required to destroy them. Their 2520 years of rule are in the past, and they must now submit to a complete overthrow. We are expecting that the work of their crushing will steadily continue until its full accomplishment. "A short work will the Lord make upon the earth," is the Scriptural declaration.—Romans 9:28.

At the sounding of the seventh trumpet Messiah was to take unto himself his great power and reign. That trumpet is now sounding! "And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come." (Revelation 11:18) Surely the nations are angry now! They act as if they were bereft of common sense. We see readily enough that the spirit of selfishness has prevailed there right along; but that some hindrance or fear heretofore held them back. But finally, when the Lord's "due time" has come to permit it, they broke through their restraint. The Lord has at this particular time especially to do with the affairs of the nations. And this war was allowed to occur at about the end of the Times of the Gentiles, at the appropriate time when they are to be dashed to pieces with the iron rod of the iron rule. (Psalm 2:6-12) It is our judgment that we shall see more of this iron rule and its breaking influence, not only upon the nations, but upon society at large. Now in this great day of the Lord everything that can be shaken is to be shaken to pieces and shaken out, to the intent that nothing unrighteous or unworthy shall remain. God himself is doing the shaking.

FINANCIAL SHAKINGS

For our own part we are looking for great shaking in financial matters. There has never before been a war that has shaken the world as this war has done. This effect is largely because of money conditions. The only thing that is current is gold. Silver was demonetized forty years ago. The results of this we are just feeling now. At the present time stocks, bonds and all other kinds of securities are largely built on confidence. As soon as confidence begins to shake, all these securities decline in value. With such a lack of confidence among the people, we can readily see that there is good ground for the bankers to have a great deal of trepidation—"men's hearts failing them for fear."—Luke 21:25, 26.

Since the beginning of the war there have been bonds and stocks sold as low as thirty per cent less than those of last July. But the Exchanges did not recognize these sales. Why? They wish to keep the prices up. The banks have their vaults filled with stocks and bonds. If the Government inspectors should come in to take stock, they would count the stock up at the price of the last sale; and the Government officer's duty would be to say, "You must make this right before you enter into business tomorrow morning." They would reply that they have any amount of securities. But the answer would be, "We do not want securities; we want gold." There is not enough gold in the world to pay the debts. These debts are put into gold bonds. The interest on all the debts is represented by gold bonds. But everybody is going to say, "I do not want bonds or stocks; I want gold."

The business people of today who are feeling the strain most are the wealthy. They have the stocks and bonds, but they have not the gold, the money. If you demanded gold at the banks in exchange for something else, they might give it to you, but unwillingly. Gold notes are the same as the gold, because the Treasury must, according to law, have that gold on hand to exchange for them when presented.

This matter is causing trouble, not only in the United States, but down in South America and Central America. They would like to buy goods. And the question comes, "Have you the money? Have you the gold?" "No, we have no gold. Sell to us in the same way you have sold heretofore." "No, no, we cannot do that; something has stopped. We do not know what is the matter." The wheels have stopped, and the people who have their fingers in the way are getting them pinched. There is not enough money; and the very people who destroyed silver money forty years ago are the ones who are now getting pinched.

THE TIME FOR JUDGMENT IS RIPE

We believe that the Times of the Gentiles ended just on time, as shown in Volume II of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. The hand of justice is now doing the breaking—the nations shall be broken as "a potter's vessel." The whole cataclysm of trouble may be upon the world during the next ten months or it may be longer deferred. We believe that the time for the setting up of the kingdom was on September 21, 1914. At that time, when it was due for our Lord to take up his great power and reign, the nations were already angry. They were at war over a month in advance of the time, because so angry.

The due time for the "wrath" was September 21. We are expecting to see this wrath still more manifest. The nations have been in just this same unloving spirit one toward another for a number of years, but apparently they have been under some forcible restraint. We believe that God's time had not yet come. We wondered, and many people wondered, how their anger could be restrained much longer; much has been written about it in the nswspapers. When the Balkan war came, it was because the nations were angry; and it very nearly led to this conflagration. Austria tried to precipitate the trouble at that time, but the German Kaiser held back. Now the restraining hand has been removed. The time is ripe.

"WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT WE TO BE?"

Seeing that we see all these things with such clearness, and realize what it all means to the church, how soberly and carefully and faithfully we should live! Never were the words of the Apostle Paul—"Let us watch and be sober"—more applicable than now. Accompanying the momentous events that usher in the new dispensation are special trials and difficulties, not only to the world, but also to the church. The Apostle says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." But "as a snare will it come on all them that dwell on the earth." All except the brethren will be surprised, disappointed, chagrined, found unprepared and more or less overtaken. But the brethren, because they have been feeding at the Lord's table, and are strong in his might, will not be overtaken unawares. The Apostle urges that because the brethren are "children of the light," "children of the day," they shall not act as children of the darkness, "children of the night."

In the new day that is just dawning we shall have the "reign of righteousness." We belong to that new dispensation. While living in the flesh, we are not of the flesh; while living in the world, we are not of the world. Our minds are clarified by the light of the new day. We are not interested in the things of this world, but in the things of the Lord; and because of our special relationship to the Lord, as his elect, we are not left in the darkness of the world.

Above all others, then, we should be sober. When the Apostle enjoins, "Be sober," he is not referring to the use of

intoxicating liquors; for those who have the Lord's Spirit, the Lord's mind—the truth—do not so indulge. Neither would we understand him to mean that we should always go about wearing long faces; for the children of the light should of all others be happy, cheerful people. But we should be sober in the sense of being of serious mind, thoughtful, not given to frivolity or levity, but earnestly watching our thoughts, our words, our doings, that we may in all things bring honor to our King whose name we bear. We who have our eyes open see what sin is and how the reign of sin is about to culminate. We see God's arrangements; and having entered into a covenant with God, we surely must be sober, vigilant, realizing the great battle now on between Light and Darkness, between Truth and Error; realizing that faithfulness in this "evil day" will require all the soberness of mind, all the fortitude, that we possess. We shall continually need the wisdom from on high. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) It is only those who are using to the best of their ability the power and the talents already given them who have any right to ask for further wisdom and who are prepared to use more.

THE "CUP" OF THE APOSTATE "WOMAN"

The Scriptures speak of various kinds of intoxication. We can be intoxicated with the spirit of the world. But it would be impossible for true children of the Heavenly King to become thus intoxicated. We have a new wine which the Lord gives, and we should be fully satisfied and not seek the intoxication of the world. Then there is a spiritual intoxication, the spirit of error. All the world are intoxicated with this spirit. All Christendom has been made drunk with the wine which comes from the golden cup mentioned in Revelation, which the apostate woman, has held out for all to drink. This cup is filled with false doctrines. These false doctrines were her mixture. Thank God! the intoxication of these is passing away, and we are able to see more clearly than ever before. But we see many who are still intoxicated.

The most stupefying potion is the doctrine of eternal torment. It gives people the impression that after they have heard of Christ, have turned from outward sin, and have professed his name, that is all there is to it, and now they should go out and try to induce others to turn from a life of sin. They verily think that there is nothing more to do, not recognizing that there is an important work of grace to be attained in their own hearts, and that they are to be upbuilt in the knowledge of God and in obedience to his will; and that is his will, "even their sanctification." As a consequence of this, many of them are mere babes in Christ; and many more are not even justified to life, having never made a full consecration of themselves.

Many professed Christians of broad mind and of good influence are thoroughly confused with this wine of false doctrine. They are content to give some money to the church system and to engage in some works of benevolence. It does not occur to them to seek for further knowledge of God or of service for him. How much these need to be delivered from the enslaving influences which are binding them hand and foot! How glad, how thankful we are that the chains of bondage will soon be broken and the captives all set free! The children of the light, however, are properly on the watch all the time. They are not influenced by the deluding, false doctrines. We rejoice that the morning is about to dawn, the time when all will be awakened and see the light as it will then be streaming from the Sun of Righteousness, risen with healing in his beams.

We who are now awake should be very active and energetic in the service of God; for we have a hundred-fold more opportunities than those of other days—by telegraph, by telephone, by mail and by newspapers, by rapid and convenient train service, through the printed page, etc. This is pre-eminently the time for the Lord's children, "children of the day," to be sober, vigilant, active. In the presence of so great opportunity, who should not be sober and vigilant.

And we are to watch. What should we watch? Pre-eminently we should watch ourselves, to keep ourselves from the snares of the present time, which are more insidious and entrapping than ever before, so that we do not endanger our peace with God nor lose our enlightenment. The adversary is on the watch, and it is necessary that the Lord's people be especially alert and watchful. In the past there was little opportunity for the Lord's people to watch the fulfilment of Scripture; for these fulfilments were far apart. But now is the time for us to watch particularly along this line. The Times of the Gentiles have ended, and the nations are now disintegrating.

There are certain indications that the Lord has a great work for all his people, his watching saints, at the present time. Unless we are on the alert, we might go to sleep. In our Lord's time the disciples were disposed to go to sleep, and to go back to the fishing business, instead of doing the work the Lord had outlined. We should all be fully awake and watching to see what is the duty of the hour and then to be diligent in doing it.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE NEVER BEFORE SO GREAT

There are some of the Lord's children who seem possessed with the idea that "the door is shut," and that there is no further opportunity for service. So they become indolent in regard to the Lord's work. We should lose no time dreaming that the door is shut! There are people who are seeking the truth—people who are sitting in darkness. There never was a time like the present. Never have so many people been ready to hear the good message. In all the forty years of harvest there have not been such opportunities to proclaim the truth as now present themselves. The great war and the ominous signs of the times are waking people up, and many are now inquiring. So the Lord's people should be very diligent, doing with their might what their hands find to do.

Business men are greatly troubled. At the present time there are thousands of business men who scarcely get a night's rest. "Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." (Luke 21:26) They do not know what to do. They thought they were secure; for they had large bank accounts and stocks and bonds. Now they say they do not know what these things are worth. "We had some insurance too," they say, "but we do not now know whether the Insurance Companies can pay." Their stocks and bonds are not salable. Their holders are therefore in perplexity. They have not had the security of God's promises, and they have nothing on which to rest. But the Lord's people have the full assurance of his Word that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God"—love him supremely.

Then let all of us whose eyes have been anointed with the "eye-salve" of present truth, who are loyal to the Lord, lift up our voices and point the way to those who are bewildered and troubled, who know not which way to go, nor where to seek for comfort, who long for something substantial upon which to rest, when everything seems to be slipping from beneath their feet. Their religious teachers have failed to be true to their commission, and they have been left to grope in darkness. Some of these may be helped by our efforts and led to the "green pastures" and "still waters" of the true Shepherd's fold, before the dark night is fully upon the world.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."—Psalm 34:7.

There is more or less difficulty associated with all attempts to think about the great Jehovah, his character and his power. The Scriptures seem to indicate that God has used various ways of manifesting his power to his people—to the Jews during the Jewish age and to the Christian church during the Gospel age. We think it would not be an improper thought that the word angel may stand for any agency or power, whether animate or inanimate, that God would be pleased to use in connection with service. God could make the wind or the flaming fire his messenger. He could make the great Archangel or an inferior angel his messenger. He could use as his messenger whatever or whomsoever he might choose to invest with the requisite power; just as a representative of these United States, going to another country, would be recognized, regardless of his own personal ability or standing.

The details of how the Almighty has knowledge of our prayers, our thoughts, our words, our needs, are not furnished us in the Scriptures; and evidently it is not necessary, therefore, that we should understand these in every particular. We do not think that any finite mind could comprehend God. He is too great for our comprehension far too mighty for us to understand fully all his powers, his ability. Nevertheless we can apprehend some things respecting God, and are therefore invited in the Scriptures to study him along the lines of his revelation. To assume that God is in every place, in every niche of space throughout the universe, seems to us an absurdity, not taught in the Bible; and to assume that God knows about every little tadpole, pollywog, microbe, or

that he even takes knowledge of every act of each one of the human family, when there are millions upon millions of these, is beyond our understanding.

If we should limit God's attention to the church, still there are thousands of these; and the capacity to understand and deal with ten or twenty thousand people in an instant seems to us to be an impossibility. Nor could such an arrangement be what we would expect God to have. Any human being who would attempt to deal with even a hundred people and to know everything going on would be thought to be very unwise. Rather he would have various agencies through which his will would be done by those hundred people, by which he would know what was being done, and by which they would know his purpose respecting the work. His general knowledge of matters would not imply that he would be in every room in the house at one instant nor take notice of every person at the same instant.

In our present text, however, we are inclined to think that the word "angel" used by the Psalmist refers to spirit beings. Our reason for thinking so is that the revelations of the Lord in olden times previous to Pentecost were nearly all by spirit beings. These materialized and then dematerialized, vanishing from sight. In general the Scriptures seem to indicate that God's dealing with his people in those earlier times was through angels. As respects this Gospel age, just closing, we have confidence that God has shown as great care in his dealings with spiritual Israel as he did with natural Israel; for spiritual Israel comes nearer to him as his house of sons than did natural Israel as a house of servants. But God expects the house of sons to walk by faith and not by sight, a much higher walk. Hence his manifestations to these are not such as appeal to the natural senses. They are, nevertheless, just as real.

THE EYES OF THE LORD

We read that "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him;" also, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." But this does not give us the thought that God personally beholds every individual act of every person on earth, but that he takes cognizance of matters throughout the world by means of his power, his agencies. These "eyes" referred to are the Lord's influence, his power of knowing, whatever the means. Whether his power is exercised and his will executed through angels or through other forces and agencies, it makes no difference—no more than it would with us in carrying out our wishes. If we wished to know about certain matters in Philadelphia, there would be various methods by which we could learn. One effective method would be to telephone and get into direct communication with the individual, provided he is supplied with a telephone. Or through the telegraph we could send a message; or we could send a messenger directly to the party, by foot or by train or some other conveyance.

Now if mankind have these various ways of accomplishing their designs, we can appreciate our Heavenly Father more by thinking of him as having full ability to come into communication with his children, and as having various agents of communication. God has means, no doubt, far superior to any of ours. He has not revealed the matter clearly to us except to tell us that he is informed respecting all that concerns us, as well as respecting all the affairs of the world. He does tell us that angels are his ministers, and that these have a charge over his people. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" They do not minister in the sense of directly providing bread for us, nor in the sense of cooking our food, nor of building our houses—in none of these ways do they minister. How, then, do they serve us? We have no way of knowing positively how they serve except from the words of our Lord Jesus, that the angels of God's "little ones" always behold the face of the Father, always have access to him.

The fact that these angels represent the Lord's "little ones" would imply that they would have immediate access to God and have immediate attention. What would be the use of the Father's receiving the angels into his presence unless there was something to be communicated? Our understanding is that God's knowledge of our affairs and interests is gained by methods with which we are not acquainted. We may assume, however, that the mediums used are largely the angelic messengers. The head of every business house and banking institution has certain laws, certain regulations, governing all the operations of the business. Just so God has certain laws governing nature. It is not necessary that we pray to God that the earth may turn around upon its axis and that tomorrow may come. We may be sure that the Almighty, the one who represents exact justice and infinite wisdom, has laws that govern his entire universe; that the angels have insight into these laws; and that they are Jehovah's deputies, just as an earthly court might deputize some one to sit in chancery and to take information.

OUR LORD JESUS THE CHIEF MESSENGER

If in connection with our text we also have in mind our Lord's words before his ascension, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age," we shall understand that the Lord Jesus is the Chief Messenger, or Angel, of Jehovah. He has surely been the Chief Messenger to the Gospel church. Our thought, then, is that through the angels and other agencies God is governing the world, and especially caring for his people, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of all the divine spiritual powers and has charge of all Jehovah's affairs. We have been brought into the School of Christ. He is our Teacher. When we go to the Father in prayer, we do not ignore this Teacher, but we go in his name; and we are not to suppose that the Father would ignore him. He would be the Father's representative in dealing with us. But we are not to suppose that the Lord Jesus has every detail of the affairs of the world under his personal supervision; but rather that those angels report to him whatever is necessary, and that thus there are certain principles operating. This seems to us to be the reasonable and logical arrangement of divine operation. We are not insisting upon this for other minds, but merely saying that this appeals to our own minds.

In view of the fact that the church has been put under the special guidance of the Lord Jesus, it would not be a far-fetched thought that Jehovah encampeth round about his people through Jesus, and that the angels are under his direction. If Satan is the chief of his band of angels, so our Lord would have angels under his control, and he would be their Prince. We read of what Alexander the Great accomplished, and of what Napoleon Bonaparte did, regardless of the fact that they had many thousands under them to carry out their will. So we think of all the spirit beings as under the direction and guidance of Jesus Christ. Into his hands God has committed all power in heaven and on earth. All the angels of God were made subject to him; and through these, under the control of our Lord, all the interests of God's people are supervised. This is our thought, and we like to think so.

DELIVERANCE IN VARIOUS WAYS

Our text proceeds to say that the angel that encamps around the people of the Lord "delivereth them." In olden times the Lord's children were sometimes delivered miraculously. Some were delivered from prison; others were not. Some were delivered from the sword; others were not. We should accept the will of God, whatever it may be. But in order to be able to do this, for our spiritual good, our ultimate good, we must realize that the terms and conditions under which we accepted of him were that we would give ourselves unreservedly into his hands. A proper fear, or reverence, for the Lord, would surely lead us to place ourselves fully in his keeping and under his guidance and control. Our experiences in life have shown us how unable we are to direct ourselves aright. The Lord will deliver each of us in the way that will bring us the largest measure of blessing.

In the days of the Apostles, St. Peter was delivered from prison by an angel of the Lord, who appeared to him as a man. This was in the interest, not only of the Apostle, but of the entire church, showing them that the Lord was able to fully care for his people, giving them valuable lessons. And although these outward manifestations are not given to us of the present time, we have other blessings that more than compensate for these outward tokens that are not at present for the good of the church. We are able to say with the Apostle that all things are working together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to his purpose. We should be full of confidence in him—that we are subjects of his choicest care at all times.

EACH SAINT HAS HIS MINISTERING ANGEL

While we may not be too positive in our interpretation on this subject, we understand that each one of the Lord's people, in proportion as he is one of God's true children, has a ministering spirit, a person, an angel, who has charge of his affairs. This angel makes his report to the Lord, whether monthly, weekly, or hourly, we do not know. If God sees this to be the wise, proper course, we have every confidence in his wisdom. Whatever God has arranged is fully satisfactory to us in this matter, and we are sure that it is quite right and fully in harmony with the divine character.

We think that this principle is illustrated in the Book of the Prophet Daniel. Daniel had been praying and after some little time his prayer was answered. The angel Gabriel, who

was the Lord's messenger to Daniel, explained to him certain things. At the beginning of his supplication the Lord had purposed to send him an answer. Gabriel had been sent especially to inform him, but had been detained by certain other duties. The fact of his detention should not give us the thought that Daniel or any of the Lord's people would ever be neglected; but that while minor affairs of Daniel were under the guidance of some lower angel, there were important matters that were entrusted to Gabriel as the plenipotentiary, as it were, in regard to Daniel's interest and other matters. There was a delay, and Gabriel mentioned what the delay was; the prince of Persia had withstood him for twenty-one days.

We have heretofore pointed out that this Gospel age has been different from the Jewish age and preceding ages; that after the Gospel dispensation was ushered in, outward demonstrations, such as the gifts of the holy Spirit—the gift of healing, the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and discerning of spirits—and angelic visitations passed away; and that during the Gospel age it has been God's will that the spiritual house of Israel should walk by faith and not by sight, and that therefore it would be inappropriate after the church was fully established to expect angels to appear, to manifest themselves outwardly.

But the angels of the Lord, nevertheless, have a charge more particularly over us of the Gospel church than over any other of the Lord's people at any previous time in the world's history. The Lord is especially interested in spiritual Israel. These angels, then, care for us, supervise our affairs, and are God's agencies or channels of communication to us as to his will; that is, communication in the sense of providences for us, causing this providence or the other providence.

HOLY ANGELS NOT MANIFEST TO OUR SENSES

We would not give the thought of the angels whispering into our ears. We think that the angels which now whisper in the ear are the same ones that give table-tippings, planchette communications, communications through the hand by writing, and various other communications to the ear and the eye of spirit-mediums; namely, evil spirits, fallen angels. Our understanding is that the holy angels do nothing of the kind. The Lord's people of the present age are to find their instruction in his Word. There is no need of a book on Mormonism or Spiritism or New Thought or of clairvoyant or clairaudient power for the Lord's children. These are all snares of the adversary and his demons.

The followers of Christ have the Bible and the invisible ministeries of the holy angels to provide for their interests and to providentially guard and guide their affairs. This, to us, is very real and of great comfort. If we had the thought that God was doing all this personally, we would think that he had certainly forgotten us. But having the assurance of his word that not a hair of our heads can fall to the ground without our Father's attention, our mind can rest in the fact that he accomplishes his purposes in Christ for his children through the ministrations of the holy angels.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT

MARCH 14—1 SAMUEL 11: 1-15.

KING SAUL, ALTHOUGH ANOINTED OF GOD, WAITED FOR THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE—HIS OPPORTUNE MOMENT AND HOW HE UTILIZED IT—HIS ACCEPTANCE BY THE PEOPLE—OPPORTUNITIES OPEN FOR ALL—LESSONS FOR ALL IN SAUL'S EXPERIENCES—SPECIAL LESSONS TO THE CHURCH, ALSO CALLED TO KINGLY OFFICE—THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD—ALL MEN TO BE MADE KINGS AGAIN BY MESSIAH'S REIGN—ALL LOVERS OF INIQUITY TO BE DESTROYED.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—**Proverbs 16:32.**

Israel had asked for a king. God, through the Prophet Samuel, had caused the anointing of Saul to be the king. The people of Israel had assembled, and God's Prophet Samuel had indicated God's choice for them. Some of the people had gladly accepted the choice; but the rougher element had refused it, sneeringly saying, Who is he? What is his record, that we should hope for anything great in his hand?

It looked as though the Lord and his plan had failed—as though the choice had been an unsatisfactory one and had come to naught. Saul made no attempt to exercise authority, seeing that he had such half-hearted support from the people. He returned to his home—resuming his life as a farmer; but we may be sure he was patiently waiting for the opportune, or phychological moment to arrive when, with God's blessing, he would enter upon the duties and responsibilities of a king, for which he had been divinely anointed.

Saul's farm life continued only a month, until the opportunity offered which brought him the support of all the people as king. The Ammonites, residing in the east of Israel's possessions, were making war on one of the tribes of Israel. For some time they had besieged Jabesh-gilead, until the city was in such straits for food, etc., that they asked terms for surrender. The taunts of the Ammonite general was that on one condition he would save their lives; namely, they should each submit to having one eye put out, as a shame on the whole people of Israel.

Time was asked—seven days—for decision. If they could not get help in that time, they would submit to the terms. Messengers were dispatched, possibly to all the tribes. At all events some came to the place where Saul resided, evidently hoping that the one who had been chosen king, acceptable to some, would take steps for their deliverance. The disgrace of the situation struck home to Saul's heart. Israel to whom God had promised the possession of the land and his assistance, lacked faith and leadership.

Saul was appointed leader, and the psychological moment for him to lead had come. He killed the yoke of oxen he had been driving and sent pieces to all the tribes, saying that whoever did not respond, to become a defender of the general interests and to wipe out the shame, would have his oxen hewn to pieces. This was a peculiar command for a king; but it seems to have touched the right spot, for three hundred and thirty thousand men responded. The messengers returned to Jabesh-gilead with assurances of succor before noon the next day; and they gave answer to their besiegers to the effect that they would by the time appointed march out for the Ammonites to do with them as they thought best—meantime expecting such deliverance as would make their enemies impotent to harm them.

King Saul divided his army into three sections, and from three different quarters came suddenly upon the besieging hosts, routing them, destroying many lives and delivering the people of Israel. Thereupon the masses of the Israelites realized that God had indeed given them a wise king, whom they had been slow to recognize; and they inquired for those who had spoken against Saul at first, saying, Let them now be slain. However, the king was wise and generous, and said, "There shall not a man be put to death this day; for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel."—Verse 13.

THE DIVINE CHARACTER VINDICATED

We again remind our readers that although this war and the slaughtering of those Ammonites had the divine approval and blessing, it did not signify what many of us once supposed; namely, that those thousands of Ammonites slaughtered in their sleep or in their waking moments, went immediately to the theological hell, there to suffer eternal torments. On the contrary, they merely went to the great prison-house of death, the tomb, there to sleep until in God's arrangement Christ would die as the world's Redeemer—and more, until at his second advent the Redeemer should take his great power and reign, begin his work of calling back from death all that are in their graves.—John 5:28, 29. See Revised Version.

To grasp the situation we must remember that all men are under a death-sentence, conviction, not worthy of life everlasting. All were to die anyway; and it mattered little whether they would die from starvation or sickness or pestilence or by the sword. The penalty merely reads, "Dying, thou shalt die"—not live, anyhow or anywhere. This view of matters has a distinct bearing on everything appertaining to the Lord's authorization of wars, and permission of famines, sickness, etc. While God has enforced the penalty, "The wages of sin is death," and has thus manifested his justice, he in another way has been preparing for the manifestation of his love. The first step of this love-manifestation was in the sending of his Son to be man's Redeemer—to die for Adam's sin, under which all the race is condemned to death.

Still the divine plan is hidden from the world in general. Only the Lord's consecrated people may have a clear understanding through the Bible of God's great purposes of love for the race. These are informed, and are able to comprehend the message, that ultimately God will establish a kingdom

which will bind Satan's power, release humanity from its mental, moral and physical weaknesses—the results of the curse—and restore all the obedient to full perfection and to relationship with God.

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT ALL

Looking out into the world, we perceive that opportunities for progress and greatness are by no means equal. Nevertheless, few men and few women make use of all the golden opportunities which do come to them for their own betterment and for usefulness on their part to their fellows. All such may take a good lesson from Saul; for he had naturally some good traits which he subsequently diverted or misused.

That Saul had humility is evidenced by the fact that when the suggestion of his becoming king was made, he repudiated the thought of his worthiness of the position, saying that there were greater tribes than the one of which he was a member, and that even in his own tribe, his family was not the most prominent. Again, at the time when Samuel the Prophet called the people, that the Lord's lot might be determined as to who should be the king, Saul was in hiding amongst the stuff, sitting amongst the piles of baggage. He knew how the Lord's lot would fall; and it was to his credit that he was not strutting about amongst the people showing himself, and saying, The Lord would surely choose me. Again, when some of the people murmured that he was not acceptable, Saul quietly went to his home and to his farming, letting the matter rest. Thus he displayed patience and wisdom, as well as humility.

His subsequent action and leading the army of Israel showed his faith in God and his courage. Had Saul maintained these characteristics, his experiences later would have been very different. But nearly every young man and young woman on the threshold of life, as well as when older, can gain some valuable lasting lessons from Saul's experiences.

It may surprise some when we say that Christians—God's consecrated people—may especially learn lessons of profit from Saul's experiences. They, like Saul, have been nominated of God, not only to be kings, but also to be priests, "a royal priesthood." As Saul was anointed with the oil, so the royal priesthood are anointed with the holy Spirit. As the people rejected Saul, and he waited patiently for the Lord's time, so the people, mankind, are not yet ready for the reign of the royal priesthood, of which Jesus is the Head; and God's time has not yet come for the establishment of the kingdom. Lessons of patience, of humility and of confidence in God are requisite that after enduring, they might inherit the promises. —Hebrews 6:12.

The great Armageddon is at hand, and terrible lessons will be learned by the world at great cost. Thereafter the kingdom of Messiah will be very popular; and they will be saying, as they did in Saul's case, Let all those who oppose be put to death. However, The glorified Christ—Jesus the Head, the church his members—will be very gracious, and a general amnesty will be proclaimed for all who will desire to come in line with the kingdom.

Not only those who persecuted the Savior will be forgiven and be assisted back into harmony with God through him, but those, also, who have despised the royal priesthood and persecuted them unwittingly, will be mercifully dealt with. "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, The Lord be glorified: [We do it for the good of the cause] but he shall appear for your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

The shame that will then come upon all who in the meantime had resisted the Lord's choice for his kingdom class will be a sufficient penalty. After the shame and God's forgiveness to all the willing and obedient, The Christ will bring blessings of "restitution, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:21.

A WORLD FULL OF KINGS

God created Father Adam the king of earth. Had he remained loyal to his God, he would have retained not only his life and health and happiness, but also his kingly authority over the beasts, the fish and the fowl—ruling them with telepathic powers. The breaking of the covenant with God by Adam not only brought death and separation from God, but impaired his ruling powers as respects the lower creatures. The redemption accomplished by the death of Jesus is eventually to reach every member of Adam's race, and not merely will be applicable to their restoration to human perfection of mind and body, but will include a restoration of kingly powers.

In a republic there is a recognition of the fact of a human equality before the law. In a republic, every man is a king; and these kings vote for one of their number to be a president-king, or otherwise to hold a government executive position as the servant of all. This is a theory, an ideal, but we all know that it is more or less defective. It is in vain to claim that all men are born free and equal when we know that there are great inequalities of birth, of character, of talent, of will-power. While, therefore, a republic would be the ideal condition for perfect men, it only partially meets the requirements of the case so long as man is imperfect.

Nor will Messiah's kingdom be established as a republic. Instead of giving humanity more power and leaving everything to be settled by the popular will and vote, Messiah's kingdom will do the reverse. It will lay down the law, punish every infraction of the law, and point men to the fact that they are not qualified to govern themselves, and that therefore, God has decreed the establishment of Messiah's kingdom to rule over humanity, while they are in the imperfect condition, and to bring them up by restitution to full perfection, where they will be able, as originally designed, to all be kings; or, failing to come up to this standard, they will be destroyed as incorrigible, lovers of iniquity.

Surely the divine program for humanity is beautiful, simple, and sublimely grand! It leaves nothing to be desired further. As the Bible declares, it will be "the desire of all nations." Those whose eyes and ears of understanding are open to appreciate this message of the Bible have much advantage every way over the average man at the present time. This knowledge is very assistful to them as they come to realize that the anointing of the holy Spirit upon them is with a view to preparing them to be the royal priesthood of the future and, with Jesus, to bring to mankind the blessings of Jehovah, lost by sin, redeemed at Calvary.

PREFERRED MONARCHY TO REPUBLIC

MARCH 7.—1 SAMUEL 8:1-10.

ISRAEL A THEOCRACY—HUMANLY A REPUBLIC—A KINGDOM PREFERRED—SAMUEL OFFENDED—THE REQUEST GRANTED—SAUL, SON OF KISH—HIS ANOINTING—CHOSEN BY LOT.

"*Fear God, honor the king.*"—1 Peter 2:17.

Israel's government was a theocracy; that is to say, God was their King, his law was their government. The elders of each tribe supervised its affairs. God provided a priestly tribe, which represented the religious interests of the people. Prophets and judges were sent them from time to time as special messengers of the Lord, but without authority except as the people believed their counsels to be wise. Thus Israel was, to far as its earthly interests were concerned, a republic, in covenant relationship with God.

No one will dispute that a republic is the highest type of government. In a republic each citizen is a sovereign; and these sovereigns, by their votes, appoint some of their number to be their representatives and servants. But this highest type of government can be thoroughly appreciated only by intelligent people, and can work the highest good only in the hands of intelligent and conscientious people, submitted to the divine regulations.

Had no fall occurred, undoubtedly this highest form of human government would have prevailed. The Scriptures indicate that after Messiah's kingdom shall have thoroughly subjugated sin, thoroughly uplifted humanity, absolutely destroyed all the wilfully wicked, and shall have completely brought the remainder of the race up to absolute perfection, then, at the close of Messiah's reign, the earth to all eternity will be a republic, each member of the race a sovereign.

Our lesson shows us that the Israelites did not appreciate their divinely arranged republic. They beheld the splendor of the surrounding nations, and thought that because they were different, it was to their disadvantage.

As a result of the noble reform instituted by Samuel and maintained throughout his long judgeship, the people were greatly blessed, and the national spirit was strengthened. But they perceived that the Prophet was growing old, and they feared that his sons would seek to succeed and continue themselves as judges. The narrative tells that they were unreliable—"walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and perverted judgment."

The elders of the tribes conferred together and believed that it would be better to choose from amongst themselves a king and thus become more like the nations roundabout. They came to Samuel with the matter, as children to a father, as wise men to a statesman of extraordinary wisdom. They told him their desires. Samuel was disappointed, but gave no answer to them until he had time to confer with the Lord. The Lord bade him not be offended—that it had not been he who was rejected, but that the Lord had been rejected and his government.

But the Lord was willing to let them have their experiences with kings; nevertheless, Samuel was instructed to fully inform them what would be the consequences, what would be the manners of the kings, what would be the difficulties. He explained that their liberties would be fewer—that the kings would exercise a more or less autocratic power and would conscript their sons for servants and for soldiers and for public works, and that thus their liberties would be greatly abridged, the wealth of the people would more or less flow into the coffers of the king, and the best of their lands and of everything would gradually pass into his control. Instead of being the sovereigns, the people would be the slaves of the sovereign, retaining at best only a portion of their rights, etc.

The people, however, had set their hearts on having a king. Already they were imagining how a king would lead them forth and give them dignity, marshal their hosts, and cause fear of them in the hearts of their enemies.

DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE ILLUSTRATED

At the appointed time, Samuel, apparently by Divine arrangement, having received instructions from the Lord, came in contact with the one who was to be the future king—Saul, the son of Kish. The story reminds some of witchcraft and other occult doings. A herd of asses strayed from the farm of Kish, and Saul was sent to seek them. After searching in vain, he and his servant called upon the Prophet to ask his wisdom—that the Seer tell them where the asses were. The answer was that the asses were found, but that Saul was to come and dine with the Prophet in an appointed place where guests had already been invited, food already prepared, etc.

The place of honor was given to Saul; and the young man, fresh from the country, was astounded to hear the Prophet speak of him as being the choice of Israel for their leader. He modestly called attention to the fact that he belonged to an inferior tribe—a small one—the tribe of Benjamin; and that his family was not even the greatest in it. But the Prophet persisted, addressing him as the one to have future honors.

The next morning he was called early and directed respecting his journey in such a manner that he would have corroborations of things that the Prophet intimated in advance. He would meet certain people, and by some he would be invited to partake of food, etc. Moreover, he would meet with certain experiences which would make of him a changed man. Meantime, as the two walked together and Saul's servant went before, the Prophet drew forth a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, anointing him to be the king of Israel by divine appointment. However, matters were kept secret until such time as would be indicated.

Saul's faith in the Prophet's declaration was strengthened by the fulfilment of the very experiences foretold. Meeting a company of those who were styled a school of prophets, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul and he joined with them in their singing and prophesying. We read, "God gave Saul another heart, and the Spirit of God came upon Saul, and he prophesied."—1 Sam. 10:9, 10.

DIFFERENT OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We are to remember that the Spirit of God signifies simply an invisible power from God. Those coming under this power sometimes acted in one way and sometimes in another—sometimes speaking, sometimes writing, as they were moved by the Power of the Holy One, Jehovah. Let us not forget the clean-cut distinction which the Bible makes between the holy Spirit in its operations upon men before Pentecost and since. Since Pentecost, the impartation of the holy Spirit generally signifies that begetting influence which the Lord gives to consecrated believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, by which begetting and anointing they are brought into the family of God as sons, and are enabled to have discernment of mind to more and more appreciate the mind of God as expressed in the Bible, by the prophets of the past.

But previously, the holy Spirit simply signified a holy energy, and meant no begetting to sonship; for, as the Scriptures declare, the holy Spirit (in this sense) was not given until Jesus was glorified. (John 7:39) Only saintly persons, fully consecrated to God and fully trusting in the merit of Jesus, are spirit-begotten now, but any person might at times be used of the Lord as an amanuensis to write, or as a servant to do or to say, wherever, whenever, whatever, the Lord wished to have said, done or written.

The Spirit which came upon Saul was not the Spirit of sonship; the change of his heart did not signify that he had become a new creature in Christ; for there could be none such until Christ, the Head of the church, had come and, as the Forerunner of his members, had opened up "the new and living way." Saul had a new heart in the sense that he no longer had the mind, purpose, "disposition," to be a farmer, but a divine "disposition," will, ambition judgment and wisdom granted him especially qualifying him to the office to which God had chosen him; namely, to be a statesman.

In other words, God's holy Spirit, qualifying Saul for his position as a king, was a mechanical one, much after the same manner that we read that God qualified certain workmen in preparing the Tabernacle. The Lord said to Moses, Choose any workmen for this particular work, and I will put my Spirit upon them, and thus qualify them for the work to be done. We may be sure that if God calls any man for any particular work, he is quite able to qualify him for its performance, whether it be a religious work, as is sometimes given to his consecrated people, or whether it be for some work of public benefit, as for instance, in modern inventions, which belong in this dawning time of the new dispensation.

EVIL OCCULT POWERS IN OPERATION

The difference between Samuel and his occult powers, and the occult powers of others today is this: Samuel's were manifested under divine direction at a time when God was pleased to use such powers amongst his people Israel—powers which doubtless will be in exercise also to some extent during the Millennial age for the world's guidance. But the Scriptures recognize evil occult influences; and the Israelites were warned against necromancers, those who claimed to have communion with the dead, and those that peeped and muttered and had mediumship, etc.

The Bible explains that the fallen angels personate the dead. The Bible tells that the dead are really dead, that the dead know nothing whatever until the resurrection. The Lord warned Israel that these evil spirits would seek to personate the dead, and thus to indoctrinate them in error and lead them away from God. Similarly, throughout this Gospel age, the same evil spirits, the same fallen angels, have used, and do still use more or less of occult power—psychic powers, mediumistic powers, mesmeric powers, hypnotic powers—to mislead, to attract away from the truth, to make error appear to be truth—especially to make people believe their dead friends are not dead, but more alive than before they died.

During this Gospel age, we believe that God does not use such hypnotic powers, but as St. Paul declares, he has "spoken to us through his son," and has given us his Scriptures, "that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work"—not needing any occult powers. Hence we know of no good occult powers, but are to rate them all as deceptions of the adversary, against which God's people are fighting.

In due time, in harmony with the will of the Judges of Israel and with the divine consent, the people came together to Samuel to have the matter of a king amongst them decided—to have the will of the Lord expressed in the matter. Again Samuel expostulated with them, and told them the dangers of leaving the simplicity of God's arrangement and taking up with the monarchial arrangement. But seeing that they still desired a king, he acted for them and drew lots as respected the different tribes, and then the different families in the chosen tribe, and then the different members of the family indicated. The lot fell on Saul as Samuel knew it would do and as Saul also knew; for they believed the Lord's hand was in the matter.

The fact that they used this method of casting lots should not be considered as an endorsement of such a method today; for we are living under different institutions; and neither the natural nor the spiritual Israelites are in that relationship with God in which he proposes to guide their affairs by the casting of lots.

When the lot fell upon Saul, the elders of various tribes began to look for him. Where is he? Finally they found him bashfully sitting amongst the stuff—the luggage that belonged to the parties that had come to the gathering. As he was brought forth, the young man in the prime of life—probably seven feet tall, of athletic build—he exactly filled the ideal of the people. They were pleased with God's choice, and God had already qualified Saul that he might be a successful king if he would prove loyal, faithful and obedient to him.

LESSONS FROM SAUL'S FAILURES

MARCH 21.—1 SAMUEL 14:1-46.

OBEDIENCE WITHOUT ITS SPIRIT CAUSED SAUL'S DIFFICULTIES—THE KINGDOM, TAKEN FROM SAUL'S FAMILY, GIVEN TO DAVID, "A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART"—SAUL PROFITED PARTIALLY BY HIS MISTAKES AND WAS BLESSED ACCORDINGLY—LESSONS FOR EVERYBODY—PARTICULARLY FOR GOD'S CONSECRATED PEOPLE.

"Let us put on the armor of light."—Romans 13:12.

The army which gathered to Saul, and which accomplished the victory of our last Study, was disbanded; and subsequently the king had a standing army of three thousand men. One thousand of these were under command of his son Jonathan. The remainder constituted a royal guard and were immediately under Saul's own directions. Apparently the land of Israel was completely dominated by the Philistines, who here and there had garrisons. These were content to take a certain amount of tax from the people, much as the British govern India.

The Israelites were poorly armed; for the Philistines would not permit them to have weapons of war lest they should rebel. Similarly, the British prevent war munitions from going to India for the same reason. When therefore Jonathan made an attack upon the garrison of the Philistines and wiped it out, it raised a hubbub, much as such a circumstance would do if the people of India were to rise against the British garrison there. It meant war. The Hebrews trembled at what might be the result, just as the people of India would tremble at what the British might do in a similar case.

The Philistines increased their army of occupation; and the Israelites—unarmed, except with agricultural implements, etc.—were terrorized by the warlike Philistines. Saul's army of three thousand dwindled to six hundred—yet the word which reached him from the Prophet Samuel was, to wait seven days for his arrival, apparently with the intention that the people should thoroughly feel their impotence, and cry unto the Lord for succor. King Saul did as directed to the extent of waiting seven days; and with the expiration of the time, seeing how his army was dwindling and that Samuel had not returned, he on the seventh day undertook to be his own priest. He offered up sacrifices to God without authority.

Just as he had finished the sacrifices, the Prophet Samuel appeared, reproved him sharply, and told him that because of his failure to fully obey the Lord, his family should not be continued as the Lord's representatives in the kingdom of Israel. The king apologized, explained the circumstances—thought it necessary to do something, and that what he did was the only thing he could think of. Very few kings or generals of our day would be prepared to do any nearer the will of the Lord than did King Saul. Very few would have waited seven days at all, or would have paid any attention to the Prophet. Very few would have apologized to the Prophet afterwards, and explained why they attempted to offer sacrifice to God.

We cannot but think that if King Saul had been given further opportunities he might gradually have learned the lesson of implicit obedience to God; and yet our next lesson will show us that he again failed along the very same lines. It requires many experiences to teach some of us the lesson of complete reliance on the Lord and full obedience to his every requirement. Perhaps the Lord was wishing to teach a special lesson along this line—that any king sitting upon the typical throne of the Lord must be implicitly obedient, not merely to the letter of the command, but also to its spirit; for Israel's kings to a considerable extent foreshadowed the kingdom of Christ and his church. Those who will be joint-heirs with Messiah and his kingdom of glory must learn obedience; else they will not be accounted worthy of the honors of the kingdom. They must not only be outwardly obedient, but inwardly obedient to the spirit or intent of the Lord's law.

ONLY PRIESTS MIGHT SACRIFICE

While passing, we do well to note why King Saul's sacrifice of burnt offerings to the Lord was condemned as a sin. This was because God had made a specific law to the effect that only the priests might offer sacrifices. Then comes the question, Why should God limit the offering of sacrifices to the priestly tribe? The answer is that that tribe typically represented the church—fully consecrated to God and accepted by him. These the Apostle styled the antitypes, not only of Israel's kings, but also of Israel's priests. St. Peter says of the church in general, and not of the clergy in particular, "Ye are a royal priesthood."

In the antitype, all of God's consecrated people are prospective kings and are sacrificing priests. Unless these saintly Christians sacrifice their earthly interests, their present lives, they will not get the great reward of joint-heirship with Christ, the great Chief Priest of their profession. As we read, "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him"; and again, St. Paul says, "I beseech you, brethren, ... present your bodies a living sacrifice."

It would be therefore a mistake for us to suppose, as some do, that the clergy have special priestly offices now, and are commissioned to offer mass and prayers. Let us remember that there is only one great High Priest—the Lord Jesus—that he offered up himself in the days of his flesh, and has passed beyond the veil into glory, and that he has since been offering up his consecrated people, who present themselves to him in the proper spirit of submission and self-sacrifice.

The Bible recognizes no division of the people of God into clergy and laity. This was a snare of the adversary, introduced gradually in the third and fourth centuries. The Bible teaching is that all spirit-begotten children of God are members of the antitypical royal priesthood, that they are all brethren, that they are all ordained or authorized to preach the message of God's grace as presented in God's Word; and that they should call no man on the earth father; but should realize that One is their Father, even God, and that the Lord Jesus is their Elder Brother.

CRAVING FOR ANOTHER CHANCE

How many of the human family have felt, when they reached their death-beds, that if they had life to live over again, their lessons of experience would be precious and enable them to do much better! The man or the woman who has not had some experiences along this line of failures and endeavored to surmount them and to do better, has lived his life very much in vain. Let us therefore encourage one another to strive for high ideals, and not to be discouraged by our unintentional failures. This is expressed by the little quotation which we all learned in childhood, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." That little message which came to our childish minds was a valuable one. It helped us over many a discouragement.

Beset by our own weaknesses with which we were born, surrounded by others who similarly have weaknesses of mind, body and morals, and assaulted, as the Scriptures assure us we are, by Satan and the fallen angels, who seek to ensnare us and divert us from God and from righteousness, is it any wonder that we fail to come up to our own highest ideals, and therefore fail still more seriously to come up to the perfect standards of God's Word?

The very simplest statement of God's law is the Golden Rule. Yet how many who understand that Golden Rule and its spirit perfectly could claim that they live up to its requirements every hour, every day? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." All that any of us can do is to be honest with ourselves, to confess our delinquencies, to strive daily to overcome these and to attain more and more to the divine standards in thought, in word, in deed.

It is a further lesson, which only Christians have learned, that it is impossible to live up to the standards of this Law, and that we need the covering of the Redeemer's merit—even after we have surrendered all to him to seek to walk in his steps—to cover our shortcomings and to continue us in relationship with God. Another lesson which the Christian learns is that those continuing in relationship with God find not only forgiveness for trespasses unintentionally committed, but find also grace to help, assistances for every need—through the same Savior.

Thus the Christian is learning of his own weaknesses and of God's mercy, and growing strong in battling for the right day by day. He not only has a second chance, but has many repeated chances, day by day, of repentance of sin and of making a fresh start after recovery from the stumbling, through the merit of Christ.

King Saul in our lesson had no such experiences; the Savior had not yet died. He had not yet appeared in the presence of God, to offer an atonment or to open up a new way of life. Saul, therefore, had only the arrangement which was common to all Jews—the typical Day of Atonement, once every year, to atone for the sins of the whole people for one year, including the typical priesthood, through whom the message of God was communicated to them. And being himself partly a type, King Saul was necessarily dealt with along

the lines of strict justice, and the kingdom was declared to be forfeited by his family because of his offering to the Lord a sacrifice not authorized.

THE WORLD IN THE FUTURE

Gradually Bible students are learning that the story of our various creeds of Christendom is untrue, which tells that all the heathen have gone to eternal torture, and all the Jews similarly, because they did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and furthermore, that nearly all the people of civilized lands who have died, have gone to eternal torture because, having heard of Christ, they did not become his saintly followers. These terrible doctrines have driven many away from God and from his Book, as people seem to realize their horrors and injustice.

Bible students are coming to see that God has provided two trials for the whole world of mankind. The first trial was in Eden, Father Adam being the representative of himself and his race. That trial ended in disaster to all concerned. Unless God had made an arrangement for a second trial, none of the human family would ever gain eternal life or escape the sentence that came on them there. The death of Christ was for the very purpose of giving a second trial to Adam and all his race; as the Apostle declares, "As by man came death, by man comes also the Resurrection of the dead. For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive; every man in his own order."—1 Corinthians 15:21-23.

During this Gospel age, those who believe the message of the Gospel, and who consecrate themselves fully to the Lord and whom he accepts by the begetting of the holy Spirit—these become new creatures in Christ, and these new creatures are on trial a second time—their destiny being either everlasting life on the spirit plane or everlasting death. The remainder of the world are still in the condemned condition; or, as the Apostle says, they have not yet escaped the condemnation that is on the world. There is only the one way of escape now—through accepting Christ on the terms of discipleship.

However, we see that God's provision for a second trial includes the remainder of mankind who do not now hear, or who do not now accept Christ and are not now begotten again as new creatures. The world in general is to have its trial time during the Millennium. Then, "the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth." Then, "all shall know him from the least to the greatest." They will not have the opposition of Satan; for he will be bound during that time. They will have the assistance of Christ and of the glorified church, the royal priesthood.

The object of that Millennial kingdom will be to uplift the world—to bring all the willing and obedient back again to human perfection and everlasting life, and to destroy all the incorrigible ones, who refuse when they have that full and second opportunity. In this connection we are reminded of the words of the poet:

"I wish that there were some wonderful place
Called the Land of Beginning-again,
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
And all our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door
And never put on again."

The poet's words are to come true, and the time is near at hand. If, as Bible students are realizing, the present European war is a prelude to the anarchy of the great Battle of Armageddon, and is the vestibule to the kingdom of Messiah, then the time of putting off the "shabby old coat" of present imperfection on the part of mankind in general is near at hand. Surely all who have themselves put off the filthy rags of their own righteousness, and by faith put on the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, can rejoice that the poor world—to bring all the willing and obedient back again to good an opportunity as God's love and mercy have provided for them through the great Sacrifice made at Calvary, when "Jesus Christ by the grace of God, tasted death for every man"; that he who believeth on him, whether now or in the future, should not perish, but might gain everlasting life.

Not only so, but as Jesus gives all who come unto him the gracious opportunity whereby they may "try, try again," and gradually demonstrate, cultivate their loyalty to God and to righteousness, so the Bible intimates an opportunity will be given to the world in general. For a thousand years the world will have the opportunity of trying, trying again, peradventure that by the many lessons of that time they may learn righteousness and come fully into accord with the Great King Eternal and his glorious Golden Rule. This the Scriptures assure us respecting the Millennium: "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

JONATHAN'S FAITH WAS REWARDED

Our lesson proceeds to tell the story of how Jonathan and his armor-bearer, blessed of the Lord, were victorious over the enemies; and how the Philistines, divided into three parties, mistook each other for Hebrews and slaughtered one another.

CLERICAL CONSPIRACY LITERATURE

In various quarters the adversary is stirring up opposition by the publication of the slanderous statements which, as our readers know, have been answered long ago. We advise that when such an attack is made our friends meet it quickly, if possible, in the next issue of the daily press. Do not render slander for slander, but calmly, kindly point out the unscriptural course. Remind the transgressor of the golden rule and of the divine command, "Speak evil of no man." Remind the public that evil speaking has for centuries been the method of those worsted in argument. Amongst those slandered was our Savior himself; slandered as a friend of publicans and harlots; charged with being a glutton and wine bibber, and called the prince of devils. And so it has been with many of his followers since. Assert your better acquaintance with the facts and offer to anyone interested true particulars.

Then, while the subject is warm, embrace the opportunity for extensive Volunteer work. We have one number of the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY which, besides other valuable articles, contains one under the title, "A Clerical Conspiracy to Injure Pastor Russell." This article discusses the various slanders briefly and to the point; and if anybody is interested further we can supply other printed matter giving details in full. However, almost universally this one little tract sets the matter straight and convinces the people that the clergy are really fighting the truth of the Bible which they cannot answer. In writing for this number designate it "The Conspiracy Special." We will have them in good supply and make prompt shipments free of all charge on receipt of letters or telegrams.

"THE TONE OF VOICE"

"It is not so much what you say
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use,
As the tones in which you convey it.

"'Come here!' I sharply said,
And baby cowered and wept;
'Come here,' I cooed, and he looked and smiled
And straight to my lap he crept.

"The words may be mild and fair,
And the tones may pierce like a dart;
The words may be soft as summer air,
And the tones may break the heart.

"For words but come from the mind,
And grow by study and art,
But the tones leap forth from the inner self
And reveal the state of the heart.

"Whether you know it or not,
Whether you mean or care,
Gentleness, kindness, love and hate,
Envy and anger are there.

"Then, would you quarrels avoid,
And in peace and love rejoice,
Keep anger not only out of your words,
But keep it out of your voice."

EXTEND THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The brethren everywhere are remarkable for their loving zeal for the Lord, his truth and the brethren. In no way is this better shown than in what we term the Volunteer Work—the voluntary distribution of the Society's free literature. No other Society on earth ever manifested so much self-denying zeal in such a manner. We feel disinclined to advise any increase along this line. Nevertheless, it is ours to offer suggestions and indicate possibilities and supply the free literature, and yours, dear brethren, to determine the extent of your reasonable and possible service for the King of kings. We do know that there are millions of people in our home land who have never yet had a taste of the spiritual food, "meat in due season," which has so greatly refreshed and strengthened us. Hundreds of cities and towns and villages have received no volunteer attention. It is for you to decide, individually and as classes, what you can do for these. One of our very best free papers has been widely distributed except in such places as suggested. It contains a most interesting article on "The True Basis for Human Equality," another on "Battering Down the Walls of Hell," and another showing that neither Pastor Russell nor the I. B. S. A. taught "The End of the World in 1914," but on the contrary that "the earth abideth forever."

We have 400,000 of these on hand for use in such previously unserved places. We will be glad to hear from all who are able and willing to join in this volunteer work. State the quantity desired and give shipping particulars. All charges will be prepaid. Mention No. 61, BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY.

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THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING OF THE PASSOVER

"When He seeth the blood the Lord will pass over the door and not suffer the destroyer to smite you."—Exodus 12:23.

The Passover season, as celebrated by the Jews, draws near—beginning this year on the 30th day of March (the 15th day of Nisan actually starting at 6 p. m. Monday, March 29th). But the interest of Christians centers especially in the slaying of the lamb, which preceded this Passover Feast. The Passover lamb was slain on the 14th day of the month Nisan, which date this year begins at 6 p. m. Sunday, March 28th. The Memorial of the death of the antitypical Passover Lamb, our Lord Jesus, which is celebrated on the same date, will therefore be observed by us on the evening of Sunday, March 28. How much we regret that while millions of Christians and Jews will in some formal ceremonies and in a perfunctory manner celebrate this great event of history but few of either religion discern the real significance of the celebration!

THE PASSOVER INSTITUTED

Could the minds of all these be awakened thoroughly to its true significance a religious revival would be started such as the world has never yet known. But alas! as the Apostle declares the god of this world has blinded the minds of many; and even some whose eyes of understanding are partially opened St. Peter describes as being blind and unable to see afar off or holden and unable to see the deep things of God in respect to these ceremonies which have been celebrated in the world for now more than 3500 years. And by the way it must be admitted even by Higher Critics and agnostics in general that an event so prominently marked so widely observed for so long a time must have a foundation in fact. There must have been just such an occurrence in Egypt; the first-born of Egypt must have perished in that tenth plague and the first-born of Israel must have been preserved from it—all who observed the injunction to remain under the blood—else this widespread celebration of the event would be inexplicable.

We need not remind you of the particulars connected with the institution except to say that the Israelites were held in a measure of serfdom by the Egyptians and that when the time in the Lord's providence arrived for their deliverance their masters sought selfishly to maintain their bondage and refused to let them go forth to the land of Canaan. One after another the Lord sent during the year nine different plagues upon the people of Egypt relieving them of one after another when their king craved mercy and made promises which he afterwards broke. Finally, the servant of the Lord, Moses, announced a great, crowning disaster—that the first-born in every family of Egypt would die in one night, and that in the home of the humblest peasants as well as in the home of the king there would be great mourning, as a result of which they would be glad finally to yield and let the Israelites go—yea, urge them to go, and in haste—lest the Lord should ultimately bring death upon the entire people if their king continued to harden his heart and resist the divine mandate.

The first three plagues were common to all in Egypt, including the district in which the Israelites resided. The next six plagues affected only the district occupied by the Egyptians. The last, the tenth plague, it was declared, should be common to the entire land of Egypt, including the part apportioned to the Israelites, except as the latter should show faith and obedience by providing a sacrificial lamb, whose blood was to be sprinkled upon the sides and the lintels of their doorways and whose flesh was to be eaten in the same night, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, the eaters standing staff in hand and girded ready for the journey—with full expectancy that the Lord would smite the first-born of the Egyptians with death and make them willing to let the Israelites go, and with full faith also that they would share in this calamity were it not for the blood upon their door-posts and lintels.

THE ANTITYPICAL PASSOVER LAMB

The Israelites were commanded to celebrate this Passover as the first feature of the Jewish law and as one of their greatest memorials as a nation. As a matter of fact, we find that in some degree the Passover is celebrated by Jews in all parts of the world—even by those who claim to be agnostics and infidels. They have a measure of respect for it as an ancient custom. But is it not strange that, with the bright minds which many of them possess, our Jewish friends have never thought it worth while to inquire into the meaning of this celebration? Why was the lamb slain and eaten? Why was its blood sprinkled upon the door-posts and lintels? Because God so commanded, of course; but what reason, motive, object or lesson was there behind the divine command? Truly a reasonable God gives reasonable commands, and in due time will be willing that his faithful people should understand the significance of every requirement. Why are the Hebrews indifferent to this subject? Why does prejudice hold their minds?

Although Christianity has the answer to this question we regret that the majority of Christians, because of carelessness, are unable to give a reason and ground for any hope in connection with this matter. If the Jew can realize that his Sabbath day is a type or foreshadowing of a coming Epoch of rest and blessing and release from toil, sorrow and death, why can he not see that similarly all the features of the Mosaic law institution were designed by the Lord to be foreshadowings of various blessings, to be bestowed in due time? Why can it not be discerned by all that the Passover lamb typified, represented, the Lamb of God, that its death represented the death of Jesus, the Messiah? and that the sprinkling of its blood symbolizes, represents, the imputation of the merit of the death of Jesus to the entire household of faith, the passed-over class?

Blessed are those whose eyes of faith see that Jesus was indeed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"—that the cancelation of the world's sin is effected by the payment of Adam's penalty—that as the whole world lost the favor of God and came under the divine sentence of death, with its concomitants of sorrow and pain, it was necessary before this sentence or curse could be removed that a satisfaction of justice should be made; and that therefore, as the Apostle declares, Christ died for our sins—the just for the unjust, that he might bring us back to God. Thus he opened up "a new and living way"—a way to life everlasting.

"A KIND OF FIRST-FRUITS"

Those familiar with the Bible have noticed that therein the church of Christ is called "the church of the first-born," and again "a kind of first-fruits unto God of his creatures." (Heb. 12:23; Jas. 1:18; Rev. 14:4) This implies others ultimately of God's family later born—the after-fruits. Christian people seem to have overlooked these Scriptures so far as making application of them is concerned, and have generally come to believe that only those who are of the first-fruits will ever be saved, that there will be no after-fruits. But let us look at this type of the Passover—let us notice that it was God's purpose to save all Israelites, and that as a nation they represented all of mankind that will ever come into harmony with God and be granted eternal life in the Land of Promise.

Let us notice also that there were two passovers. There was a great one, when the whole nation by divine power was

miraculously delivered by the Lord and led by a sand-bar across the channel of the Red Sea especially prepared for them by the accentuation of winds and tides. That picture, or type, shows the ultimate deliverance from the power of sin and Satan of every creature who will ultimately come into accord with the Lord and desire to render him worship—not an Israelite was left behind.

But that passover at the Red Sea is not the one we are discussing particularly on this occasion—not the one whose antitype we are about to celebrate. No; the event which we celebrate is the antitype of the passing over, or sparing, of the first-borns of Israel. Only the first-borns were endangered, though the deliverance of all depended upon the salvation of the first-borns. Applying this in harmony with all the Scriptures, we see that the first-fruits unto God of his creatures, the church of the first-borns, alone, are being spared at the present time—being passed over—those who are under the blood. We see that the remainder of mankind who may desire to enlist and to follow the great antitypical Moses when he shall ultimately lead the people forth from the bondage of sin and death are not now endangered—merely the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven.

"THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORNS"

The first-born—the "church of the first-borns"—are those of mankind who in advance of the remainder have had the eyes of their understanding opened to a realization of their condition of bondage and their need of deliverance and of God's willingness to fulfill to them his good promises. More than this, they are such as have responded to the grace of God, have made a consecration of themselves to him and his service, and in return have been begotten again by the holy Spirit. With these first-born ones it is a matter of life and death whether or not they remain in the household of faith—behind the blood of sprinkling. For these to go forth from this condition would imply a disregard of divine mercy. It would signify that they were doing despite to divine goodness, and that, having enjoyed their share of the mercy of God as represented in the blood of the Lamb, they were not appreciative of it. Of such the Scriptures declare, "There remaineth no more a sacrifice" for their sins. They are to be esteemed as adversaries of God, whose fate was symbolized in the destruction of the first-born of Egypt.

We do not mean to say that the first-born of Egypt who died in that night and any of the first-born of the Israelites who may have departed from their homes contrary to command and died therefor, have gone into the second death. Quite to the contrary, we understand that all these matters were types, figures, illustrations, foreshadowings of matters on a higher plane, and that the realities belong to the church of Christ during this Gospel age since Pentecost. If we sin wilfully after we have received a knowledge of the truth, after we have tasted of the good Word of God, after we have been made partakers of the holy Spirit and thus members of the church of the first-born—if we should then fall away, it would be impossible to renew us again to repentance; God would have nothing further for us; our disregard of his mercy would mean that we would die the second death.—2 Peter 2:12; Jude 12.

From this standpoint the church of the first-born, through the begetting of the holy Spirit and the greater knowledge and privileges they enjoy every way, have a greater responsibility than the world, for they are the only ones as yet in danger of the second death. This is the lesson of the type and applies to Christians only.

By and by the night will have passed, the glorious morn of deliverance will have come, and The Christ, the antitypical Moses, Head and body, will lead forth, will deliver all Israel—all the people of God—all who when they shall know will be glad to reverence, honor and obey the will of God. That day of deliverance will be the entire Millennial age, at the close of which all evil and evil-doers, symbolized by the hosts of Egypt, will be utterly cut off in the second death.

"AS OFT AS YE DO THIS"

The Apostle clearly and positively identifies the passover lamb with our Lord Jesus, saying, "Christ our Passover is slain for us; therefore let us keep the feast." (1 Cor. 5:7, 8) He informs us that we all need "the blood of sprinkling," not upon our houses, but upon our hearts. (Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2) We are also to eat the unleavened (unfermented, pure) bread of truth, if we would be strong and prepared for the deliverance in the morning of the new dispensation. We also must eat the Lamb, must appropriate Christ, his merit, the value that was in him, to ourselves. Thus we put on Christ, not merely by faith, but more and more to the extent of our ability we put on his character, and are transformed day by day into his glorious image in our hearts.

We are to feed upon him as the Jews fed upon the literal lamb. Instead of the bitter herbs, which aided and whetted their appetites, we have bitter experiences and trials, which the Lord provides for us, and which help to wean our affections from earthly things, and give us increasing appetite to feed upon the Lamb and the unleavened Bread of Truth. We, too, are to remember that here we have no continuing city, but as pilgrims, strangers, travelers, staff in hand, girded for the journey, we are en route to the Heavenly Canaan and all the glorious things which God hath in reservation for the church of the first-born, in association with their Redeemer as kings and priests unto God.

Our Lord Jesus also fully identified himself with the Passover lamb. On the same night that he was betrayed, and just preceding his crucifixion, he gathered his disciples into the upper room, saying, "With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." It was necessary that as Jews they should celebrate the Passover supper on that night—the saving of the typical first-born from the typical "prince of this world." But as soon as the requirements of the type had been fulfilled, our Lord instituted a new Memorial upon the old foundation, saying, "As often as ye do this [celebrate the Memorial of the Passover season—annually] do it in remembrance of me"! (1 Cor. 11:24, 25) Your Jewish neighbors, whose eyes of understanding have not been opened, will not appreciate the matter in its true antitypical sense, but you—who recognize me as the Lamb of God, who in God's purpose has been slain from the foundation of the world—who recognize that I am about to give my life as the world's redemption-price—will note this Passover season with peculiar and sacred significance that others cannot appreciate. Henceforth you will not celebrate any longer the type, but memorialize the antitype, for I am about to die as the Lamb of God, and thus to provide the blood of sprinkling for the church of the first-born, and meat indeed for the entire household of faith.

"THIS IS MY BODY, BROKEN FOR YOU"

That the Lord's followers should no longer gather as the Jews had done previously to eat the literal Passover supper of lamb, in commemoration of the deliverance in Egypt our Lord shows by choosing new emblems—"unleavened bread" and the "fruit of the vine"—to represent him as the Lamb. Thenceforth his followers, in accord with his injunction, celebrated every year his death as their Passover Lamb, until after the Apostles had fallen asleep in death, and a great falling away had confused the faith of nominal Christendom, producing the epoch known as the dark ages. Even during the dark ages the teaching that Christ was the antitypical Passover Lamb persisted, though the celebration of his death in the Passover Supper which Jesus instituted fell into disuse. It was crowded out by that most terrible blasphemy, which has deceived and confused so many millions of Christendom—the Mass—introduced by Roman Catholicism. This in the Scriptures is called "the abomination of desolation," because of the disastrous influence it has had upon the faith and practise of the Lord's people. Although Protestants in general have repudiated the Mass, as being wholly contrary to the teachings of Christ and the Apostles, nevertheless the practises of Protestants are largely influenced yet by that terrible error, from which they have only partially escaped.

THE MASS IS NOT THE EUCHARIST

Many Protestants will innocently ask, Is not the Mass merely the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper, under another name? O, no! we answer—it is wholly different! The Lord's Supper celebrates the death of Christ accomplished at Calvary. The Mass represents a new sacrifice for sins made every time the Mass is performed. Our Roman Catholic friends believe that when the priest blesses the wafer it becomes the actual body of Christ in his hands, for the very purpose of sacrificing him afresh. High Mass is a particular sacrifice of Christ for a particular sin of a particular individual. Low Mass is a sacrifice of Christ for the general sins of a congregation. Roman Catholics claim to believe in the merit of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary—that it covered original sin, general sins that are past; but they claim also that the daily sins, shortcomings, blemishes of every individual, require to be cleansed by fresh sacrifices of Christ from time to time. Thus, from their standpoint, as represented in the Mass, and as practised by the Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics and High Church Episcopalians, Christ is being sacrificed afresh all the world over every day. This in the Scriptures is called an "abomination" in God's sight, because it disregards, sets at naught, the fact as stated in the Bible, that Christ dieth no more, "that by one sacrifice he hath perfected forever all who come unto the Father through him."—Rom. 6:9; Heb. 10:14.

It will be readily seen that the repeated sacrifices represented in the Mass would have the effect of nullifying or minimizing the value of the great Sacrifice of Calvary, represented in the Passover and in the Memorial Supper. How could those who had come to look especially to the Mass for the cancellation of their sins be expected to look with as deep concern and as high an appreciation as otherwise back to the antitypical Passover? While, therefore, the celebration of Good Friday has continued, the celebration of the Memorial Supper preceding it fell into disuse long ago.

As for Protestants, repudiating the dogma of the Mass as wholly unscriptural, they have abandoned it and returned to a celebration of the Lord's Supper. Meantime, however, accustomed to the frequency of the Mass, they have considered it merely a matter of expediency how often the Lord's Supper should be celebrated. Hence we find some celebrating it every four months, some every three months, some every month, and some every Sunday. This general laxity and failure to reach a common ground of conformity is due to two things: (1) Christian people generally have overlooked the fact that our Lord's death was as the antitypical Passover Lamb, and that its celebration is the antitypical Passover Supper; (2) They have misunderstood our Lord's words, "As oft as ye do this," to mean, Do this as often as you please, whereas the words really signify, As often as you, my disciples (all of whom are Jews and accustomed to keeping the Passover), celebrate this occasion, do it in remembrance of me—not in remembrance of the literal lamb and the typical deliverance from typical Egypt and its bondage through the passing over of the typical firstborn.

Those who celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly consider that they have Scriptural precedent for so doing because in the Bible we read that the early church met together on the first day of the week and on such occasions had the "breaking of bread." It is a great mistake, however, to confound such breaking of bread with the Memorial Supper, for the former was merely an ordinary meal. There is absolutely nothing in the record to indicate otherwise; the wine, the fruit of the vine, is not mentioned in connection with it, and the bread was not said to represent the broken body of our Lord. It was a cheerful social custom in the early church to celebrate our Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week, and this common social custom helped to unite the bonds of brotherhood and fellowship. In many places the Lord's people follow this custom still. The Tabernacle congregation at Brooklyn has such a breaking of bread every Lord's day between the afternoon and the evening services, as a convenience for those living at a distance, and especially as a desirable opportunity for extending fellowship amongst the Lord's people.

THE DATE OF THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

As we all know, the Jews used the moon more than we do in the reckoning of their time. Each new moon represented the beginning of a new month. The new moon which came closest to the spring equinox was reckoned as the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, the first day of the month Nisan. On the fifteenth day of that month, the Feast of Passover of the Jews, lasting a week, began. That Feast of seven days represented the joy, the peace, the blessing, which resulted to the first-borns of Israel from their passing over, and typified the complete joy, peace and blessing which every true Christian experiences through a realization of the passing over of his sins through the merit of Christ's redemptive sacrifice. All true Christians, therefore, in their hearts have a celebration of this Feast of Passover continually—the completeness of the matter being represented in the seven days, seven being a symbol of completeness. Not seeing the matter from the same standpoint, the Jews thought less of the killing of the Passover lamb and the eating of that supper than he did of the week following it. But our Lord emphasized the importance of the killing of the Passover lamb when he announced himself as its antitype and when he invited us to celebrate his death on its anniversary, until, at his second coming, our entrance into the kingdom would signify the complete fulfilment of all our blessings.

It would be a great blessing, doubtless, to many Christians if they could see this subject in its true light, could lay more weight upon the value of the death of Christ, and join more heartily in its celebration—on its anniversary, instead of at various other times and seasons, irregularly and without special significance. However, there have sprung up all over the civilized world little groups of the Lord's people who are taking heed to this subject, and whose delight it is to celebrate the Master's death according to his request—"As often as ye do this"—annually—"do it in remembrance of me." We believe that such a celebration brings special blessing to both heart and head. The nearer we come to the divine requirements the greater is the measure of our blessing, the more closely are we drawn to our Master and Head, and to each other as members of his body.

The date of the celebration this year will fall on March 28, after 6 p. m., because at that hour begins the 14th day of the month Nisan, according to the Jewish reckoning. We urge upon all of the Lord's people everywhere to gather as may best suit their convenience in little groups or families to do this in remembrance of our Lord's great sacrifice. The fact that it is the anniversary of his death makes the matter the more impressive.

"LORD, IS IT I?"

We recall the circumstances of the first Memorial, the blessing of the bread, and of the cup, the fruit of the vine, of our Lord's exhortation that these represented his broken body and shed blood, and that those who are his followers should participate—not only feeding upon him, but being broken with him, not only partaking of the merit of his blood, his sacrifice, but also in laying down their lives in his service, in co-operating with him in every and any manner. How precious these thoughts are to those who are rightly in tune with the Lord!

Following these thoughts they may think of the course of Judas, who, though highly favored, loved filthy lucre to the extent that he was willing to sell his Master, and was bold enough even while his treachery toward the Lord was being exposed to cry, "Is it I?" The very thought that any who had companied with the Lord could thus deny him and betray him to his enemies causes a proper loathing of such conduct, and should properly fill us with caution, if not with fear, lest in any sense of the word we should for the sake of honor or wealth or any other matter sell the truth or any of its servants, the members of the body of Christ.

Let our minds, then, follow the Redeemer to Gethsemane's Garden, and behold him with strong cryings and tears praying to him who was able to save him out of death—expressive of the Master's fear of death lest in some particular he might have failed to follow out the Father's plan, and therefore be thought unworthy of a resurrection. We notice how our Lord was comforted by the Father through the angelic messenger with the assurance that he had faithfully kept his consecration vow and that he would surely have a resurrection as foretold. We behold how calm he was thereafter, when, before the High Priest and Pilate, and before Herod and Pilate again—"as a lamb before her shearers is dumb so he opened not his mouth" in self defense. We see him faithful, courageous, to the very last, and we have his assurance that he could have asked of the Father and had more than twelve legions of angels for his protection. But instead of petitioning for aid to escape his sacrifice, his petition was for aid to endure it faithfully. What a lesson for all his footstep followers!

AN OCCASION FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

On the other hand, we remember that even amongst his loyal disciples the most courageous forsook the Lord and fled, and that one of them in his timidity even denied his Master! What an occasion is this for examining our own hearts as respects the degree of our faith, courage and willingness to suffer with him who redeemed us! What an opportunity is thus afforded for us to buttress our mind with resolutions that by his grace we will not deny our Master under any circumstances or conditions—that we will confess him not only with our lips but also by our conduct.

Next we are shocked with the thought that it was the Lord's professed people, the Jews, who crucified the Prince of Life! Not only so, but that it was the leaders of their religious thought, the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees and Doctors of the Law rather than the common people. We hearken to the Master's words, saying, "Marvel not if the world hate you; for ye know that it hated me before it hated you"; and we see that he meant the religious world in our case also.

DRINK YE OF THE SAME CUP

The lesson to us, then, is not to be surprised if the opposition to the truth and the persecutions of the light-bearers walking in the footsteps of Jesus shall come from the most prominent exponents of Christianity. This, however, should neither cause us to hate our opponents nor those who persecuted our Lord to the death. Rather we are to remember the words of the Apostle Peter—"I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Ah, yes! ignorance, blindness of heart and mind, are at the bottom of all the sufferings of Christ—Head and body. And the Father permits it to be so now, until the members of the body shall have filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. With the completion of the membership of the body of Christ, the very elect, and the completion of their testing as to faithfulness unto death, will come the conclusion of this Gospel age—the resurrection change of the church to be with and like her Lord.

Then, as our Master declared, those who now partake of his broken body and are broken with him in the service of the truth, those who now participate in his cup of suffering and self-denial, will by and by drink with him the new wine of joy in the kingdom—beyond the veil.—Matthew 26:29.

"LET US KEEP THE FEAST"

With that glorious morning of the new dispensation will begin the great work of the world's release from the bonds of sin and death—the great work of uplifting. The Apostle Peter calls that great epoch "The Times of Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21) The thought before the minds of those who participate in this Memorial should be that expressed in the Apostle's words, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him"; "If we be dead with him we shall also live with him"; "for the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.—Rom. 8:17; Rom. 6:8; 2 Timothy 2:11, 12.

With these thoughts respecting the passing over of the sins of the first-born through the merit of the precious blood, we may indeed keep the Feast of the Passover with joy, notwithstanding trials and difficulties. So doing, and continuing faithful as the followers of Jesus, very soon we shall have the great privilege of leading forth the Lord's hosts—all who ultimately shall hear and know and obey the great King—out of the dominion of sin and death, out of Egypt into Canaan. Yes, dear brethren, in the language of the Apostle, "Christ our Passover is slain for us; therefore let us keep the Feast."

THE CUP OF JOY IN THE KINGDOM

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of his death, the Master in his conversation with the Apostles, said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:29) Our Lord was here contrasting two great days—the day of suffering and the day of glory. This Gospel age has been the day of suffering. The Millennial age will be the day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of wine is produced at the cost of the life of the grape. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. The cup of wine—the juice of the grape—represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this literal cup. To us it symbolizes our Savior's sufferings and death, and our own participation with him in these sufferings. But wine also represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So in the sense in which the Lord used the words "fruit of the vine" in the text just quoted, it represented the joys of the kingdom.

The Father marked out for our Lord Jesus in his earthly experience a certain specific course. This course constituted his cup of suffering and death. But the Father promised him that after he had drunk this cup faithfully, he should be given a different cup, a different experience—glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become his followers—that if they would suffer with him, would drink his cup of death with him, then they should participate with him in his future cup of joy.

BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the winepress. We are to lay down our lives in the divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as humans, and to become new creatures. "If we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him"—not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of his cup. And not until the cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other cup—the cup of kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which he rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for him down to the last moment, when he cried, "It is finished!" And so with the church. We must drink all of the cup. We must endure all of the experiences. None of the cup is to be left.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new cup of joy was given our Lord when he was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshiped him. Soon our cup of joy will be given to us. Surely there was a joyous time when the sleeping saints were awakened and entered into their reward and received the cup of blessing! (See STUDIES, Vol. III., pp. 233-240; Vol. IV., p. 622) And one by one those who were alive and remained at the coming of the Master are being gathered home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon, if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with him beyond the veil. Then we shall share his throne and partake of his glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the new wine in the kingdom; for the promise is to all his faithful saints.

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain
Could give the guilty conscience peace
Or wash away the stain.

"But Christ, the Heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A Sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

"My soul looks back to see
The burden he did bear,
While pouring out his life for me;
And sees her ransom there."

SACRIFICIAL LOVE VS. DUTY LOVE

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (*Matthew* 22:37-39) *"This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*—John 15:12, 13.

The qualities of wisdom, justice, love and power are fully harmonized and unified in the character of our Heavenly Father, our Creator. In him these qualities are supplemental to each other, and in the fullest harmony. And we are to strive to incorporate into our own characters these same qualities. When we use these terms in reference to mankind, we are bound to recognize in how compartively small a degree these character-qualities are possessed by humanity.

We use the terms justice and love as representing characteristics which are more or less imperfect in all mankind. We speak of charity, or generosity. This quality, a certain manifestation of love, goes beyond mere justice. Here is a person to whom we owe a dollar. It is not charity for us to pay him that dollar. It is duty, justice. A certain course would be right and nothing less than that would be right. Certain things are obligatory. Beyond obligation would be mercy, compassion, love.

What is our duty toward our neighbor? Suppose that the neighbor has fallen into debt or that his life has been forfeited. What ought we to do for him? Shall we give our lives for his life? Shall we assume his obligation? To do so would be a very loving deed. It might also be just, but it would go beyond the line of mere justice; for justice would require merely that we do for our neighbor just as we would have him do for us, if our positions were reversed. The Golden Rule would measure what we should do for our neighbor. If after we have done this, we wished to do a little more, this would go beyond the demands of justice; it would be love, favor.

But we should notice that the law of God demands not only justice, but also love—love supreme to God, and love to our fellowmen. It demands mercy, kindness. Let us note the injunctions along this line which God gave to natural Israel under the law. Let us see how far-reaching they were. "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee." (Exodus 23:4, 5; Proverbs 25:21, 22) If love so broad and so comprehensive as this is demanded by God's law, and was obligatory upon natural Israel, to what degree should spiritual Israel possess and manifest this noble quality!

JUSTICE PRONOUNCED MAN'S SENTENCE

The penalty that God placed upon our sinner race involved humanity in crying, sighing and death. It was not a special exercise of love that pronounced the death penalty. It was a special exercise of justice. However, there was no violation of the principle of love in this death sentence; it was in full

harmony with love. In due time God manifested his love for man, even in his fallen condition, by the gift of his choicest treasure—his Only Begotten Son. He was not deficient in love during all those four thousand years before he sent his Son to earth. His love remained as far as compatible with the perfection of his character. It was no longer a love of fellowship, as with a perfect being; but it was a love of pity, of compassion.

Love was not obligated to make provision for the redemption of fallen man. The act was one purely of grace; and if redemption was of grace, it was not of justice. In sending his Son, then, to be man's Redeemer, God took a step beyond anything that justice could require. Herein was manifested the love of God, the compassion of God, superabounding over what was his duty. No duty-claim could be pressed by man; for he had forfeited all his rights, and had become a convict before God's righteous law. But God's great mercy in providing a deliverance for this convict race illustrated his glorious and beneficent character. In this was manifested the love of God for us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; and this was Jehovah's own plan. So love can go beyond justice, and even beyond the measure of love demanded of a perfect character.

The love of God and of Christ, as manifested in the great plan of redemption, was a sacrificial love. So those who are invited to become members of Christ's body are to have this same love. It is not merely the love demanded by God's perfect law, which is incumbent upon all his intelligent creatures on whatever plane; but it is more. It is a love which will gladly lay down the life purchased for them by the death of Jesus. This life is laid down as a sacrifice with their Lord and Head. We lay down our lives in service for the brethren, and this sacrifice is acceptable because the merit of Christ is imputed to us, making us reckonedly perfect before God. As the Apostle says, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." The brethren could not demand this of us, nor we of them; but we should all do so gladly, as we have opportunity.—1 John 3:16.

LET US HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST

As Christ redeemed us by laying down his life as a willing sacrifice, so let us have this same mind, this same disposition, this same will. This is the special covenant of the church—the covenant of sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5) This is the covenant which our Lord made with the Father, and we are to follow in his footsteps. The world will gain everlasting life if they come up to the standard of justice required by God's law. But as for us, we must have a still higher standard.

So when the Apostle declares that "Love is the fulfiling of the law," he is not limiting those who are so governed by love as to do the Father's will even unto death, to the mere keeping of the law given to Israel. To be of this elect class, a member of the royal priesthood who covenant to lay down their lives as a sacrifice, requires more than merely fulfilling the demands of the law. It requires love to a self-sacrificing degree. And so by gladly carrying out our Father's will for us, we shall prove ourselves worthy of glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature—which has been promised to the overcoming class—the "more than conquerors."

"Love is the filling from one's own another's cup,
Love is a daily laying down and taking up;
A choosing of the stony path through each new day,
That other feet may tread with ease a smoother way.

"Love is not blind, but looks abroad through other eyes;
And asks not, 'Must I give?' but, 'May I sacrifice?'
Love hides its grief, that other hearts and lips may sing,
And burdened walks, that other lives may buoyant wing.

"Brother, hast thou a love like this within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou hast reached this goal."

OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men." —1 Thessalonians 5:15.

This text is a part of the counsel of the Apostle Paul to the church at Thessalonica, in connection with his message on the subject of the second coming of our Lord. He reminds them how carefully and faithfully they should live, who had such hopes of glory, such hopes of being gathered to Christ at his appearing and kingdom. He exhorts them that they "warn the unruly," that they "comfort the feeble-minded" [faint-hearted], that they "support the weak" [those not strong in the faith, comparatively undeveloped]. Then in the words of our text, he urges that "none render evil for evil unto any."

We do not understand the Apostle to mean that no one in the church should be permitted to render evil for evil. It would not be in the power nor in the jurisdiction of any one to see that none others do evil. The only ones who have such power or authority would be God himself and his great representative, Christ Jesus. In fact, if we undertake to see that no man renders evil for evil, we shall be busybodying in every man's matters; we shall cultivate the habit of evil-surmising, and shall have no time for our own business. The Apostle means, Let each one see to it that he does not return evil for evil. This principle is to govern each; each is to exercise care in his own case.

The thought seems to be that we should be critical of our own motives, of the principles underlying our own conduct. We should reason, "I am about to do so and so. Is this course right?" We should judge our actions in advance. We should not go blundering along, failing to take ourselves in hand, and then say, after the thing is done, "Well, I intend to make amends." Of course we should make amends if we have done wrong. But we should get into the habit of so controlling our mind that it would preclude our doing what we should not do.

While in the flesh, of course we shall never attain perfection in action or words, but we should earnestly endeavor to do our best to attain this. We shall not do our best unless we set ourselves very diligently about it, and determine that we will by the help of the Lord attain as full control of our flesh as is possible. If we make up our minds that we will conquer, much can be accomplished.

ALL THE SAINTS STRONG CHARACTERS

The Savior so loved to do right that he laid down his life for righteousness' sake. Thus it is to be with all who are under his banner, fighting a good fight. But there is a natural tendency to retaliation, especially in persons who have the disposition of conquering—the very class that God is now seeking. These are the ones who have the qualities of an overcomer. They have a strong individuality; they have a will. They are not supine; they are not merely placid. Those to whom truth appeals are strong characters; and people of naturally strong character are inclined to carry out the law of Moses—"an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"—in the cases of those who have done wrong.

But the Lord's injunction to the church is to the contrary, for this is the way of the sinful world. God has not yet forced the world into obedience to righteousness; in the Millennial age he will do this. The special people who have followed Jesus from the world into consecration to God are pledged to do the will of God, to support the right. Being strong characters, they wish to correct that which is wrong. That is a natural impulse and a good one. But we must remember that it is not the time now for us to judge and discipline the world. The Scriptures say, "Judge nothing before the time." We are therefore to await God's time. If the matter is a legal one, and we are personally wronged by process of law, we are to yield to it in in the right spirit, even though it be unjust. Let us wait for the Lord's time and way to set things straight.

THE CHRISTIAN NOT A GENERAL POLICEMAN

If you receive a double injury, here would be a double reason why you would wish to correct it. The inclination to try to do so would rise, but there should be nothing like retaliation. We are not to return evil for evil. We are under responsibility to do evil to none. The expression, "See that none render evil for evil," has been understood by some to signify that the Christian should be a kind of general policeman, to see that his brethren, his neighbors, and everybody else, do no one harm. This is a mistaken idea. There seems to be a certain exception, however, in the case of the head of a family. As the head of the house, one would be responsible to the civil law, as well as to the divine law, for the conduct of his household.

Some have supposed that this injunction of the Apostle means: Let the elders of each congregation see that the members of the congregation do no wrong. This likewise is not the right thought. This Scripture does not given an elder any more right to see that none render evil in return for evil than it does any one else. The passage seems to mean this: Let each of you see that you do not yourself render evil for evil.

There might be some ways in which it would be proper for any member of a family to render help to another member who

was being wronged. If, for instance, one saw another doing injustice to a third, he might remonstrate. He might say, Brother (or Sister), do you not think so and so about this matter? And so with the church. But the elders are charged more especially with looking after the interests of the church. If they should see some one in the Ecclesia not living up to the Scriptural standard, it would be quite proper to make a suggestion to that one about the matter. But we must not be busybodies in other people's affairs.

We are to build one another up; for thus the bride makes herself ready. These matters should be approached only after prayer and in the very wisest way possible, lest we do more harm than good. Let us remember that we are consecrated to righteousness, to follow that which is good. Let us also remember that not merely in the church are we to render no evil for evil, but amongst all men; for we have pledged our lives to follow that which is good under all conditions and circumstances.

According to the standard of God's Word, the disciples of Christ should be the most polished, the most courteous, the most refined, the most generous, the most kind and considerate, of all people. Theirs should not be merely an outward appearance of these graces, so common to the world, but should be a kindness, a gentleness, which springs from the heart, because of the possession of the Lord's Spirit, the spirit of justice, of mercy and of love. Thus they are to let their light shine in their lives.

DIFFERENT INSTRUCTIONS DURING JEWISH AGE

Under the Jewish law it was different in some respects. Every Jew was an avenger of God, to render just punishment for any crime. He who sins shall suffer, was the principle; and this is a right principle. During the period of the law dispensation it was very necessary, evidently, that these lessons of just retribution for sin should be deeply impressed upon the people of Israel. So during that time it was commanded that if a man shed blood, by man should his blood be shed. (Exodus 21:12; Leviticus 24:13-20; Numbers 35:9-33) If they saw their neighbor do a wrong, they were to help adjust that wrong. They were to have this principle of justice thoroughly ingrained, because it is a principle of God's character. This rule held good from the days of Noah. (Genesis 9:6) It is right, too, that laws of justice be enforced by the world at the present time as far as they are able.

When Christ's kingdom is set up, The Christ will know how to make all due allowances for those who are weak. But we are instructed from the Scriptures that the Lord's people in the present time are not to judge the heart nor to be the avengers of justice. Neither are we to attempt to exact justice for ourselves; but we are to learn and to practise the principles of kindness, mercy and love. The church are to live on a different plane, a higher plane, than any others, not rendering evil for evil, but, contrariwise, returning good for evil.

We are to bear in mind that we are ourselves imperfect. We are to learn, as disciples of Christ, the great lesson of compassion. We are to show mercy by and by, when exalted to position of power, wherever conditions shall present themselves as needing mercy; and such conditions will abound; for all will be imperfect and weak until they can progress up out of their fallen state. So if we would be fitted for that responsible and honorable position of judges of the world, we must develop the qualities of love, mercy, compassion, now. We must learn to be very pitiful with the brethren and with the world of mankind, but must take heed to ourselves. Remembering our personal responsibility to the Lord, we are to judge our own course, and see that we ever "follow that which is good," both among the brethren and with all men.

GOD'S MERCIES TO DISOBEDIENT ISRAEL

MARCH 28.—QUARTERLY REVIEW.—READ NEHEMIAH 9:26-31.

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES—DIVINELY APPOINTED LEADERS—THEIR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES—ONLY ONE LAW-GIVER AND ONE LAW—TWO PICTURES OF ISRAEL'S NATIONAL LIFE UNDER THE JUDGES—MANIFESTATIONS OF DIVINE LOVE AND CARE FOR GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—LESSONS FOR THE SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."—Proverbs 14:34.

Israel's history from the time of the division of Canaan amongst the tribes until the anointing of Saul to be their king, a period of 450 years (Acts 13:19-21), is called the Period of the Judges—Joshua being the first Judge and Samuel the last. These judges were evidently not elected to their position, but raised to it providentially. But as these judges had no power nor authority, collected no revenue and held no office which they could entail upon others, it follows that any power, or influence, they possessed was a personal one; and to give it weight or force implied a proper acknowledgment of them as divinely appointed, or "raised up."

This arrangement led the people continually to look to God for their helpers and leaders rather than to engage in an ordinary claptrap of politics, in which personal ambition and spoils would dominate and control. God did the nominating; and the people, in proportion as they came into harmony with him, took cognizance of his choice (and practically endorsed it or voted for it) by their acceptance of the judge. There may have been a more methodical procedure in some instances; for the elders of Israel who had witnessed God's miraculous interposition on their behalf and who outlived Joshua seem to have constituted the Judges in the different tribes during the remainder of their lifetime.—Judges 2:7.

This arrangement by which God gave Israel their Judges is in considerable harmony with his dealings with Spiritual Israel during the Gospel age—raising up for them from time to time special counselors, deliverers, ministers. Similarly spiritual Israelites are not to caucus, wire-pull and decide for themselves who shall be their spiritual leaders, but are to regard the Lord as the great Chief Captain and to look to him to raise up from time to time such spiritual chieftains as he may please. The acceptance of the leadings of these as God's appointees does not necessarily mean their selection by ballot, but may be indicated merely by giving ear to their teachings in harmony with the Word of the Lord.

The lead of such spiritual lieutenants of divine appointment will always be marked by spiritual victories and the bringing of the Lord's people into closer heart-relationship with him. Any leadership which does not produce such fruits is evidently not of the Lord, for the Spirit of the Lord leads not to bondage, ignorance or strife, but to love, joy, peace of heart, liberty of conscience.

Israel needed no congress or legislature; for it had one lawgiver—the Lord—and the law given at Mt. Sinai was to be perpetually the guide of the nation. The priests and the Levites, under the law, were the appointed helpers of the people in things pertaining to God—to instruct them in the law and to represent them in the typical sacrificing, atonement work, etc. In each tribe, also, the elders, according to their capacity, had charge of the civil affairs of the tribe. As for soldiers and a war department they had none. The divine law was to separate them from other nations; and if they would remain faithful to the Lord, he was to be their protector against all antagonists.

Similarly, spiritual Israel in every congregation are to look out amongst themselves for fit men for the services needed. God's law is to keep them separate from the schemes, and warfares and entanglements of the world. They are to be his peculiar people, and his pledge to them is that all things shall work together for their good so long as they abide faithful to him. Therefore they need no armies armed with carnal weapons, although they are all soldiers of the cross, pledged to fight against sin, especially each within himself, and to lay down their lives for each other—"the brethren."

TWO PICTURES OF NATIONAL LIFE

If the Book of Judges be read as a fully complete history of Israel during those four and one-half centuries, it would be a discouraging picture and to some extent would give the inference that they were continually in sin and idolatry, and suffering punishment therefor. But this would be an unfair view to take. On the contrary, the record passes by the happy period of Israel's prosperity, and especially points out their deflections from God, the punishments for such transgressions, and the deliverances from their troubles through the judges, or deliverers, whom God raised up for them. That this was in many respects a favorable time for the Israelites is implied in the Lord's promise, "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning."—Isaiah 1:26.

Incidentally the story of Ruth and that of the parents of Samuel gives us little glimpses of the other side of the matter—of the God-fearing piety prevalent amongst many of the people, the happiness and contentment enjoyed. In our own day, if we judge of the affairs of the world wholly by the daily history and details in the newspapers, we might get the impression that crimes, strikes, accidents and imprisonments constitute the whole life in our land; for the great mass of the people attending to the ordinary affairs of life are scarcely mentioned.

In accordance with this are the following lines from the poet Whittier, in which he rejoices in this land of liberty and blessing, notwithstanding the unfavorable reports thereof which go out to the world daily through the press:

"Whate'er of folly, shame or crime
Within thy mighty bounds transpires,
With speed defying space or time,
Comes to us on the accusing wires;
While all thy wealth of noble deeds,
Thy homes of peace, thy votes unsold,
Thy love that pleads for human needs,
The wrongs redressed, but half is told!"

The Israelites had been instructed by the Lord to utterly exterminate the people of the land, which extermination we saw, in a previous lesson, prefigured our conquest as spiritual Israelites over the desires of the fallen nature. Israel, however, settled down to enjoy the Land of Promise without fully exterminating the condemned ones; and later on the false religions of the latter contaminated the Israelites through friendship and fellowship. Thus those whom God had condemned gradually alienated the hearts of many from their full, proper loyalty to the Lord, seducing many of them into a lascivious idolatry.

So with the spiritual Israelites who do not wage a valiant war against the natural desires of their own fallen flesh—they find shortly that the flesh prospers at the expense of the spiritual life, and that truces with the flesh mean that their love for the Lord is gradually cooled until some form of idolatry creeps in—the love of money or of praise of men or of self, etc., dividing with the Lord the love and reverence of their hearts.

We are not to suppose that all of the Israelites fell away into idolatry; we are rather to understand that repeatedly a considerable number of them became alienated for a time from the love and worship of the Lord, and thus repeatedly brought upon them the Lord's disfavor. Applying this to spiritual Israel, we are not to expect that the Lord's displeasure with his people would delay until they had fully and completely gone into idolatry to self or wealth or fame; but rather that when some of the affections of the heart begin to go out to other things, the Lord's chastisements would be sent to reprove, rebuke and correct while still there is in our hearts something of obedience and love toward him—before the world, the flesh and the adversary should have time to capture us completely.

These records of divine chastisements and of Israel's subsequent repentance and the Lord's deliverance are all proofs of the divine love and care for that consecrated people. So far as we have information the divine power was not thus exercised upon the other nations for their reproof, correction, etc. They were left as strangers, foreigners, aliens from God and from promises.

So now the Lord's corrections in righteousness, his chastisements, etc., are evidences of special protection, care and relationship to the house of sons. It is because of our acceptance in Christ and our consecration to the Lord that he in turn has accepted us as sons and gives us the experiences, trials and difficulties needful to our testing and character-development. This is to the intent that we may realize the treachery and the seductive influences of our own fallen natures, represented by the Amalekites, the Canaanites, etc.; and that we may utterly destroy these, and thus come eventually into the condition mentioned by the Apostle when he declares that the consecrated should bring every thought into captivity to the will of God in Christ.—2 Corinthians 10:5.

When natural Israel learned one lesson after another and, as fast as each was learned, sent a cry of loyalty up to God, his power was exercised on their behalf, and their deliverance was effected. So with the Spiritual Israelite; when he recognizes the true situation and with thorough repentance turns unto the Lord and cries for deliverance from his own weaknesses and imperfections according to the flesh, his prayer is heard, and his deliverance is provided for with the assurance that the Lord's grace is sufficient. Such a cry to the Lord implies that the sins and weaknesses of the flesh were contrary to the transgressor's will. It implies that in some manner he was seduced or entangled by the world, the flesh or the adversary; but that his heart is still loyal to the Lord and to the truth. All such who cry to the Lord in sincerity and faith shall be heard, shall be delivered; for his grace is sufficient for us.

ISRAEL'S WRONG COURSE

The government of Israel was different from every other government in the world. God was their King; and in his providences, according to his covenant with them, he supervised their affairs—whether by permitting them to go into temporary captivity because of unfaithfulness to him, or by prospering the nation and guiding their efforts favorably when they lived in obedience to him. In many respects their condition was most happy.

But in the days of the Prophet Samuel as the elders perceived that his sons were not to be relied upon to follow in their father's steps and be faithful, impartial judges, they forgot—or perhaps had never fully realized—that God was their real Judge, their King; and that Samuel was only his representative and mouthpiece. They forgot that although Samuel was growing old, the Lord was "the same yesterday, today and forever," and able to raise up for them, in his own due time, a judge of the kind best suited to their necessities. Doubtless, also, they did not realize that personally and nationally they were on a higher plane than the nations round about them that had kings. On the contrary, they felt that they were "out of style"; and, as people are very apt to do, they concluded that the majority must be right.

Influenced by this servility to custom, the elders of Israel petitioned Samuel that he as God's representative would anoint for them a king—make them a nation of servants to one of their own nation. It is hard for us to sympathize with such ignoble sentiments, such prayers for their own degradation. Samuel seems to have viewed the matter from this standpoint, and perhaps he also regarded it as a personal slight to himself. However, he very properly took the matter to the Lord in prayer; it was not for him to decide—he was merely the Lord's mouthpiece and representative, to speak to the Israelites whatever message he should receive.

How grand it would be if the whole world could be under such rule—heavenly wisdom directing and incorruptible earthly judges communicating and enforcing the divine message and law! The Scriptures inform us that this is what will eventually come to pass. (Isaiah 1:26) However, before that grand condition can be realized, it will be necessary for the Messiah to take his great power and reign. Then the people will be ready to hearken to the voice of the Lord through those whom he will appoint and recognize as his mouthpiece. As it is written, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

THE MESSIANIC REIGN AUTOCRATIC

In recounting to Israel the manner of a king, neither the Lord nor the Prophet Samuel meant that the description given would be the proper one for a model king, but rather that it would be the general course of any man raised to such imperial power as the kings of olden time enjoyed. The wrong course of kings in general may be traceable to three conditions: (1) All men are imperfect and fallen, and hence in the case of any king it would be merely a question of the degree of imperfection and the tendency to pride, selfishness and abuse of power; (2) The imperfection of those over whom a king reigns makes possible, and to some extent reasonable, the usurpation of great power; (3) The adversary's derangement of all earthly affairs, putting darkness for light, often makes it seem to both ruler and subjects that an abuse of power is really to the advantage of those ruled.

The question then arises, How will it be with Messiah's kingdom? We reply that the Scriptures teach that his rule will be autocratic in the extreme; nevertheless, no one who understands the matter need have any fear; for he who is to take the throne of the world is the one who so loved the world as to give himself a ransom for all mankind. Instead of his kingdom being one of selfishness, which would ruin its subjects for its own aggrandizement, he has shown his Spirit to be the reverse of this, in that he left the glory of the heavenly courts and humbled himself to a lower nature, in order to become man's substitute—He "tasted death for every man." It is this one who is now highly exalted and appointed heir of all things.

Let us also remember that the church, now being selected from the world, is composed of those only who have their Master's Spirit and who delight to lay down their lives in co-operation with their Lord and Head. Let us remember that according to the divine predestination none shall be of that elect class save those who are copies of God's dear Son; and that the tests of discipleship are such as to prove their love and loyalty to God, to Christ, to their brethren, to the world, yea, to their enemies also.

Who need fear an autocratic government in the hands of such a glorious King? Indeed, such a government will be the most helpful, the most profitable, that the world could possibly have—wise, just, loving, helpful. Let us, therefore, who have been called to this high calling lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and, by the Lord's assisting grace, gain this great prize of joint-heirship with him in his Messianic kingdom, to have a share with him in the blessing of all the families of the earth, in the recovery of whosoever will from sin and death.

SAUL REJECTED BY THE LORD

APRIL 4.—1 SAMUEL 15:10-23.

DISOBEDIENCE TO THE HEAVENLY KING COST SAUL THE THRONE—HIS FIRST SEVERE TEST—LESSON TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL—SAUL'S SECOND SEVERE TEST—WHY THE AMALEKITES WERE DESTROYED—WAS THEIR CONDEMNATION JUST?—SAUL'S WRONG ATTITUDE OF HEART—BEAUTY AND STRENGTH OF SAMUEL'S CHARACTER

"Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice."—1 Samuel 15:22.

The words of the Golden Text of this Study are the Lord's rebuke to King Saul by the Prophet Samuel, in connection with the announcement that Saul, by disobedience to the Heavenly King, had forfeited his privilege of representing God on the throne of Israel. The rending of the kingdom from the hands of Saul meant more than his own displacement; it meant that his son and his successive heirs should not continue as the Lord's representatives in the kingdom.

For a number of years Saul seems to have prospered fairly on the throne, and the people of Israel prospered with him. It was several years after his coronation that his first severe testing, noted in our lesson of two weeks ago, came to him. At that time a war was instituted against the Philistines, who apparently dominated Israel. Saul waited several days for the Prophet Samuel to come to offer the sacrifices of the Lord, previous to the beginning of the battle. Samuel was providentially hindered, and Saul himself, after waiting for a time, offered the sacrifices to the Lord, contrary to the divine arrangement, and then proceeded to battle, the result being a considerable defeat to his forces.

Apparently King Saul was not evilly intentioned, but lacked proper respect and reverence for the Lord and his arrangements. This incident may be said to have been the beginning of Saul's rejection by the Lord. The Prophet Samuel's words to him were, "Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord; . . . . now thy kingdom shall not continue. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart."—1 Samuel 13:13, 14.

APPLICATION TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

The lesson of this incident is as applicable to spiritual Israel today as it was to King Saul and to natural Israel in their day—"Obedience is better than sacrifice." In how many ways we may see expressions of this same condition amongst many who profess the Lord's name today! Many are workers in the Lord's cause in the various denominations of Christendom, and many are their sacrifices of time and money; but inasmuch as they are not obedient to the Lord, they fail of the blessing they would have and, indeed, in a considerable measure cut themselves off from greater privileges and opportunities. Yea, many of them, we fear, are cutting themselves off from the kingdom, from glory and from joint-heirship with our Lord in that kingdom.

From this lesson, given us in King Saul's experience, we should learn that our Heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to his Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve thereon, or that times and circumstances will alter the propriety of our obedience to him. Had King Saul been obedient and the results disastrous, he would at least have had a clear conscience; he could have said that he had been obedient to God and was not responsible for results. But if he had been obedient, God would have been responsible for results; and we know that divine power would have brought about the proper results. Let us apply the lesson to ourselves in respect to our daily conduct in every matter of life. Let us hearken to the Word of God and keep close to it, not fearing the results, but having faith that he who keeps us never slumbers nor sleeps and is too wise to err, as well as competent to meet every emergency that could possibly come upon us as a result of our obedience.

How many of the Lord's people in Babylon would be blessed by following the instructions of this lesson! Time and again they have said to themselves, "I see that present institutions and arrangements are contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ and the practise of the early church; but what can I do? I am identified with this system and am engaged in sacrificing for its upbuilding. If now I withdraw my hand, it will mean more or less disaster. I wish I were free from human institutions, and that I had my hands filled with the Lord's work along the lines of his Word; but I cannot let go, for necessity seems to be upon me. I must perform a sacrifice, and this seems to be my most convenient place for so doing."

The Lord is not pleased with such arguments. His message to us is that to obey is better than sacrifice; that we leave the matter of our sacrifice in his hands; for unless he accepts it, our sacrifice will amount to nothing, and he accepts sacrifices only from those who are first obedient. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues."—Revelation 18:4.

Although the Lord announced the rejection of King Saul, the prediction was evidently not fulfilled for several years after—perhaps for ten years. The decree stood as if it were a dead letter; for quite possibly King Saul was properly exercised by his rejection and became more attentive and more obedient to the divine will, and David, who was probably anointed about this time, was not yet sufficiently developed to be the Lord's representative in Saul's stead in the kingdom.

KING SAUL'S SECOND TEST

King Saul's next severe trial was in connection with the Amalekites—a fierce nomadic people who on several occasions had done injury to the people of Israel. In sending the message to the king, the Lord gave special instructions that the Amalekites should be destroyed, saying, "Utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Without mentioning other of Amalek's transgressions, he specifies that the destruction here was on account of Amalek's oppression to Israel in the way when the Israelites came up out of the land of Egypt, several centuries previously.

This narrative is seized upon by skeptics to prove either one or the other of two things: (1) That it was the imagination of either Samuel or Saul or of some one writing fictitiously in their names; or (2) That if it be accepted as being the command of the Lord, it would prove him to be a monster—lacking in justice, pity, sympathy and love—that he should thus command the wholesale slaughter of human creatures and dumb animals. There is but one answer to make to this matter, and it should be satisfactory to all who understand it. It is this:

(1) The slaughter of the Amalekites did not mean, as is usually inferred, that being admittedly wicked they went forthwith to eternal torture. Death had the same meaning to the Amalekites that it had to their cattle—a termination of whatever was desirable in the present life; and the desirable things of the present life were probably not more to the Amalekites than to their herds. Slaughtered by the sword, the Amalekites suffered far less than if they had been made the subjects of famine or pestilence. and had died of hunger or disease—the ending of life with little pain to themselves or trouble to others—the ending of comparatively uneventful lives, anyway.

They all went down to the great prison-house of death—Sheol, Hades, the tomb, God foreknew and had already arranged a great redemption, not only for them, but for all mankind. And that redemption, secured by the great sacrifice of Christ centuries after their death, will by and by secure to them release from their imprisonment—an awakening from the sleep of death. They will be amongst the class mentioned by our Lord, saying, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth." They will come forth under much more favorable conditions, to learn of the grace of God in Christ and to be amongst the families of the earth who shall be blessed by the seed of Abraham—spiritual Israel. The Amalekites will not be in the chief resurrection, but will be awakened unto the privileges of restitution by judgments—corrections in righteousness.

(2) It is quite true of the Amalekites, as it was of the Amorites, that they would have been cut off sooner, but that their iniquity was not yet come to the full. One lesson to be learned from this is that even though those nations may not be under special covenant relationship with God, there is a certain divine supervision—that their iniquities go not too far; and that, when these iniquities have reached their full, punishment is to be expected. We know not the particulars respecting the Amalekites; but, knowing the character of God, and his justice and mercy, we may be sure that in some particular sense of the word their iniquities had come to the full and running-over measure before this order for their execution was committed to King Saul.

KING SAUL'S WILFUL DISOBEDIENCE

Saul's error in this trial was his failure to carry out the command of the Lord explicitly. He slew all the Amalekites, old and young, except the king, whom he kept alive, possibly thinking to exhibit him in some kind of triumphal display. But as for the flocks and herds, he consented with his people to spare all that were desirable.

It was at this juncture that the Prophet Samuel came to him and the colloquy of our lesson ensued. The general narrative—Samuel's indignation and the Lord's positive statement—clearly indicates that King Saul had not misunderstood his instructions, but had with considerable deliberation violated them. Consequently we must understand his words addressed

to the Prophet Samuel to have been to a great extent hypocritical. He first salutes the Prophet with blessings and with assurances that he had performed the commandment of the Lord successfully.

Immediately the Prophet replied, "What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" The Prophet understood at once that the work of destruction had not been complete—that King Saul and the Israelits were anxious to take a spoil. This was wholly contrary to the divine direction. They were not to destroy their enemies to their own advantage, but to act simply as the agents of the Lord in thus executing his decree, the sentence of justice. They were not to take booty and thus to become like the nations about them—a robber nation, profiting by the troubles which they inflicted upon the enemies of the Lord. This is in full accord with the Lord's character and the foregoing explanation of it.

Seeing that the Prophet was not likely to sympathize with his violation of the command, King Saul began hypocritically to represent that all the sheep and oxen captured from the enemy were to be sacrificed to the Lord; and incidentally this would have meant a great feast for the Israelites; for the flesh of animals so sacrificed was eaten by them. The Prophet stopped the king in his explanation, and told him of the Lord's words of the night preceding, which in Jewish reckoning would be "this night," because their day began in the evening.

The divine message calls attention to the fact that Saul was humble when he was chosen as the Lord's representative upon the throne, and that at that time he was very willing to give strict obedience to the heavenly voice; but the intimation is that he had grown more self-confident, and therefore less reliant upon the Lord and less attentive to the Lord's commands. Getting into the wrong attitude of heart, he had failed to execute properly a very plain, specific direction. Knowingly and in violation of the Lord's command he had the spoil separated, and had spared the best when the Lord had commanded the reverse.

If, in applying the principles of this lesson to the Lord's people today, we think of the Amalekites as representing sins and remember that the Lord's command comes to us to put away sin entirely, we may get a good lesson. Like Saul, many are disposed to destroy the vilest things connected with sin, but to save the king sin, merely making him a prisoner. Many are disposed, also, to seek out the things which they realize to be condemned of the Lord to destruction—such things as would be choice and desirable to their taste; and frequently, like Saul, they claim that even these sins of the less obnoxious kind are held on to for the purpose of sacrificing them in order thus to honor God. How deceitful above all things is the heart! How necessary it is that all who would be in accord with the Lord should be thoroughly true-hearted, thoroughly sincere; and that under the Lord's direction we should seek to take away the life of every sinful principle, evil teaching, evil doctrine and all unholy words, deeds and thoughts!

OBEDIENCE VERSUS SACRIFICE

King Saul sought to defend his course, to put as good a face upon the matter as possible and to lay the responsibility for the saving of the spoil upon the hosts of Israel, who with himself were very desirous of offering sacrifices to the Lord. The Prophet's answer is the pith of this Study and contains its Golden Text. He clearly pointed out to the king what the latter should have known and what all should recognize; namely, that offering sacrifices is far less pleasing to the Lord than is obedience to his Word. No one could offer an acceptable sacrifice to God unless he was obedient in his heart and unless the sacrifice represented that obedience.

So with God's people today. It is not so much of ill-gotten wealth that we may sacrifice to the Lord; it is not so much the proceeds acquired directly or indirectly by wrong doing that we may sacrifice acceptably. Our sacrifice must be from the heart. First of all must be the will. He who gives his will, his heart, to the Lord gives all; he who gives not his will, who comes not into heart obedience unto the Lord, can offer no sacrifice that could be acceptable to the Lord. "Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice," is a lesson which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus.

It is also necessary to have the spirit of obedience. Whoever has that spirit will not only obey the divine will, but will seek to know the divine will more and more that he may obey it. It is of this class that the Scriptures declare, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them"; and again, in the words of our Redeemer, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart."

King Saul had been very diligent in his opposition to witchcraft and idolatry throughout the land of Israel, and in so doing was accomplishing a good work in accord with the divine plan, the divine will; but the Prophet calls attention to the fact that his energy in such matters would not prove an offset to his deliberate, wilful neglect of the divine injunction. The Lord's commands against sin and every evil thing are to be executed to the very letter, no matter how highly exalted the sin may be in dignity and place, and no matter how precious or valuable or desirable or toothsome the sin may be to our fallen natures. Though it be as dear as a right hand or as a right eye, there is no course open to the Lord's followers but to be obedient—obedient even unto death.

Although fully rejected, King Saul was not removed until the due time. The Prophet Samuel associated himself with the king in a public sacrifice, commemorating the victory over the Amalekites; and on this occasion he slew Agag with his own hand, and then departed to his home. He never afterward saw King Saul; yet the Scriptures declare, "Nevertheless, Samuel mourned for Saul"—thus again showing us the beauty and the strength of the Prophet's character. He was ever ready to do the command of the Lord in any and every particular, yet was not without a feeling of compassion for those who were out of the way—not a compassion which would make them his friends and lead him to co-operate in their wrong course, but one which would have been glad to co-operate with them at any time in a righteous course.

INTERESTING LETTERS

MIRACLE WHEAT TAKES PRIZE

GREATEST WHEAT STATE SENDS MIRACLE WHEAT AS ITS BEST PRIZE WHEAT TO THE WORLD'S FAIR.

DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN:

A copy of the Chicago Daily Tribune recently came to my notice containing articles, the object of which was an attack upon the Association and especially upon Pastor Russell. Among other points of attack was Miracle wheat, and thinking that some information on the subject might be of value to you in meeting this attack, I enclose herewith picture and data relative to a field of Miracle wheat I grew last year. This picture, among thousands of others of the best fields raised in the state, was sent to the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, J. C. Mohler. From this collection was to be chosen the one which would represent the State at the World's Fair, which convenes February 20th.

Now the judges in this matter did not know that this was Miracle wheat, hence they had nothing to bias their decision. So Miracle wheat received the award.

I grew 70 acres of this wheat and planted and cared for it in the regular, ordinary way, and had no trouble in disposing of it to my neighbor wheat-growers last fall for seed, at $2 per bushel.

In this section of the country we have to sow more to the acre than in some localities, hence we could not follow the 20 lbs. to the acre rate of seeding, but some we seeded at the rate of ½ bushel and some at the rate of ¾ bushel per acre, and we found the three pecks to be the better. If we were going to sow again we would sow rather more than this.

My field yielded 49 bushels to the acre—more than twice the average yield of wheat in this vicinity and in many instances more than three times as much. If this information is of any value to you or any of the friends who may have charge of the matter of setting these things straight before the public, I am thankful for the opportunity to furnish the same. With Christian love and best regards, I am

Your brother and fellow-servant,

W. A. JARRETT.

403,000 SEE CREATION DRAMA IN LONDON

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

On Sunday, the 13th inst., we completed the first seven days at the Royal Albert Hall, London. Two Sundays are included, as we have no presentation on Mondays. The following are the figures:

	Attendance.	Sale of Scenarios.
First seven days Opera House	19,767	967
First seven days Royal Albert Hall....	24,192	1,066

We count it a privilege indeed to be enabled to send reports of the Lord's work here that are an encouragement to you, and to our beloved co-laborers in the U. S. A. All the

time we are mindful of the great blessings which have come to us through you, His honored servant, and the great incentive we have received from time to time by the noble example of our dear brethren laboring by your side. It will probably never be our privilege to witness to eight millions, as in America; in fact, so far as London is concerned, the witness seems to be drawing to a close for lack of funds, although we have not as yet reached a half million of its population—only some 403,000. We are truly thankful for the opportunities which have been granted us, however, and realize that these are of the Lord's provision.

The Royal Albert Hall was somewhat of a surprise to us. On inquiry regarding it we found the manager quite willing to do everything in his power to meet us. He evidently had a good impression of our former visits to the Hall, when you gave the lectures which were so greatly used of the Lord for the opening up of the work in Great Britain. The actual net out-of-pockets was suggested by him as a fee, but exceeded our limit as to cost. Ultimately he agreed upon a figure of £200 for thirteen days, and accepted the risk of selling £10 in reserved seats per night to make up the necessary difference. A sum of £20 will easily cover the balance for "extras," and this we hope to provide from the sale of Scenarios.

It would seem to be the Lord's purpose for the DRAMA to be held back for awhile, possibly over the holiday season. We have no funds and no serviceable applications at present. In the meantime the Eureka DRAMA is claiming our attention.

At a prayer, praise and testimony meeting held at the Royal Albert Hall last evening, after the big public meeting was over, the brothers and sisters expressed their gratitude to the Lord for all the privileges bestowed. All felt uplifted and full of fervor for the truth.

Since the above was written Brother Hemery has received a letter from Sister Seibert enclosing a draft for £100. This generous gift is intended for the PHOTO-DRAMA, we understand; but Sister Seibert does not make it clear whether it is to be divided between the provinces and London, or whether it is intended for London only. The money is most welcome, and every care will be exercised to use same wisely as the Lord may direct. With much fond love,

Your brother in the Lord.

H. J. SHEARN.

"THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN"

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Some time has passed since we left you all at dear "Bethel," and nothing have you heard from us, but now as we are in Sweden's northernmost city, we want to send a message of love to you and all the Bethel family from one of Sweden's Drama groups, in which we have the privilege of laboring for our Master.

What a wonderful privilege we have to be able to help spread the "Tidings of Great Joy" amidst the world's tumult, and also what a privilege to be able to present the Drama up here, where it is so dark and cold just now! The sun is invisible fifty-two days during the winter months! Truly we have seen God's power and the manifestations of his love so wonderful that we have, oh! so much to rejoice over.

Wherever the Drama has been presented so far, much interest has been shown, and not once has the theater or hall been large enough for all to gain entrance, and many times have more been turned away than have been able to get in.

One evidence of God's power was manifested in Lidköping. It had been snowing for two days, and during one of the afternoon performances it began to snow still harder, and half an hour after the performance was over the electric power was cut off and the whole city was in darkness, with the exception of a few gas lights here and there. The two hours before the 8 o'clock performance were trying ones for us. Shortly before 7 o'clock people began to gather. All the light we had was a candle held by a sister at the book table. People kept gathering more and more, and in spite of the storm and no power, waited patiently to get in. The brothers helped to line up, and in our hearts we were sorely troubled. We prayed silently, "O God, if it be thy will and the Drama is of thee, give us power, for Jesus' sake."

Seven volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and twenty-five SCENARIOS were sold, with the light of the candle. It was fifteen minutes of 8; the candle was still giving its faint light; the people were invited in, and in but a few minutes the house was filled to its uttermost capacity. We intended to play a few records on the graphophone and then tell them something about the Drama work. We had played two pieces, and it was 8 o'clock. I came to the platform and was ready to speak to the people when the power came with a wonderful flash! The people rejoiced with us, and loud applause rang through the whole theater. We learned so much through this experience. We had no need of power before 8 o'clock, but it came just when we needed it. God wants us to be patient and to trust him.

This is only one incident, and we have experienced so many. God is love. His truth proclaims it; day by day his truth we prove.

* * *

With greetings of Christian love to you and all the dear friends, we are

Your humble servants for the Master's use,

BROTHER AND SISTER UNDEN.—*Sweden.*

CHANGES IN "SCRIPTURE STUDIES"

We call attention to a few slight changes which have been made in four pages of Vol. II. and six pages of Vol. III., "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES." These are all trivial and do not alter the real sense and lesson, but conform to the facts as we have them today. The pages containing these corrections are as follows:

Vol. II., page 77, line 1, "will be the farthest limit," reads will see the disintegration."
Vol. II., page 77, line 6, "will obtain full universal control," reads "will begin to assume control."
Vol. II., page 77, lines 16, 17, "end of A. D. 1914," reads "end of the overthrow."
Vol. II., page 81, line 9, "can date only from A. D. 1914," reads "could not precede A. D. 1915."
Vol. II., page 170, line 16, "at that time they will all be overturned."*
Vol. II., page 221, line 25, "full favor until A. D. 1914," reads "full favor until after 1915."
Vol. III., page 94, line 29, "in this end or harvest," reads "at the end of this harvest."
Vol. III., page 126, line 12, "at A. D. 1914," reads "after 1914."
Vol. III., page 133, line 21, "ere the harvest is fully ended."†
Vol. III., page 228, line 11, "some time before 1914," reads "very soon after 1914."
Vol. III., page 228, line 15, "just how long before," reads "just how long after."
Vol. III., page 362, line 11, "some time before," reads "some time near."
Vol. III., page 364, line 14, "must not only witness," reads "may not only witness."

Unless we find the chronology in Vols. II. and III. to be wrong, we must believe that it will be practically the same chronology as will be used throughout the Millennial age.

So far from the events of our time disproving the chronology, they seem to confirm it. The gathering of the nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat ("valley of graves") is evidently in progress. They are gradually realizing it to be a life and death struggle that will be awfully costly. They do not see, as we do, that it means their destruction—"grinding to powder." Nevertheless they are apprehensive of what we see coming; viz., the EARTHQUAKE of revolution, to be followed by the FIRE of anarchy, which will utterly consume them and prepare the earth for Messiah's kingdom, and cause them to hear the "still small voice."—1 Kings 19:11, 12.

The present is a time of testing, we believe, to many of the Lord's people. Have we in the past been active merely because we hoped for our glorious change in A. D. 1914, or have we been active because of our love and loyalty to the Lord and his message and the brethren!

Never before has the world been so ready to hear the kingdom message. Never before, therefore, have the privileges and opportunities of the colporteurs been so great. If there are some parts where colporteurs find it difficult to make sales because of scarcity of money, there are other parts of the country where money is not so scarce and where high prices for food make the community prosperous.

Let us see to it that we testify to the Lord by our faithfulness in letting our light shine more and more, denomstrating our loyalty to him even unto death. "Faithful is he that called you," who also will do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

COTTON SEED FREE

Again we have some cotton seed for free distribution. It is of the Caravonica cotton type, which has been so successful in South Africa. It is quite prolific. Our subscribers are welcome to sample lots, free.

*How long it will require to accomplish this overturning we arenot informed, but have reason to believe the period will be short.
†The end of the harvest will probably include the burning of the tares.

PATIENT ENDURANCE THE FINAL TEST

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4.

The Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be injurious to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellowmen. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next age the church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the throne with our Lord.

Patience is closely allied to love and mercy. If God were unloving, unmerciful, he would be without patience. In man's present blemished, fallen condition, patience is sadly lacking, although it is often exercised outwardly for policy's sake. This Godlike quality, like all the other qualities of character inherent in God and in all perfect beings created in his likeness, has been largely obliterated in humanity by the fall of the first pair.

In the New Testament there are two Greek words translated patience. One of these words signifies forbearance, long-suffering. The other carries the thought of cheerful or hopeful endurance. The latter is the word used in our text, and has a much deeper significance than attaches ordinarily to our word patience. This constancy—the endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing manner—represents an element of character, and not merely a temporary restraint of feeling or of action. It signifies a development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the requirement of divine wisdom and love, which, while permitting present evils has promised in due time to overthrow them.

It will surely be profitable for us to cultivate carefully this element of Christian character of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, and without which, his Word assures us, our character cannot be perfected. The Christian requires patient endurance to put on the whole armor of God, and having put it on, to keep it securely buckled. We need it in dealing not only with others, but also with ourselves, with our own blemishes. We should always take into account the various circumstances and conditions surrounding ourselves and others. As we look around, we see that the world is in a condition of blight, of sin. This knowledge should give us great sympathy with humanity, without which we would have but little patience. All of our brethren in Christ, like ourselves, are by nature members of this fallen human race. Therefore we should have a great deal of patient endurance with the Lord's people, as we would have them exercise this grace toward us.

THE PATIENCE OF GOD

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out his own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise of mind. At present this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the ages of glory to come God will, we believe, still work out his purposes in perfect patience, probably in worlds yet uninhabited.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in his wisdom the time will come when he will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, he will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful, imperfect condition. That time has almost arrived. The great cataclysm of trouble, now about due, will sweep away the entire present order preparatory to the establishment of the kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with himself and righteousness before he will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But he will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of sin. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, long-suffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's reign for man's blessing, and his wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil. Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favorable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of divine wisdom longer to exercise patience with such. Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience—longsuffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would properly feel that we should have known better and should have done better than we did.

LET US JUDGE OURSELVES

If a child of God realizes that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome in this matter.

Parents require much patience, forbearance, in dealing with their children. The limit of patience might differ in regard to different children. Therefore the wise parent will judge how nearly each child has been doing the right thing, and how well each has received and profited by instruction. If he finds that any child of his is wilfully doing wrong, he should not continue to be patient, but should administer the rod. This would not mean that the parent had ceased to be patient. He might have patience the next day with the same child, and subsequently the application of the rod might come again. We are rather to be too patient, too sympathetic, than to have too little patience, too little sympathy. Remembering our own weaknesses, we are to exercise patience toward others who are seeking to overcome their imperfections, even as we are seeking to overcome our own. We all need that patience, forbearance, be exercised toward us.

OUR LORD'S LESSONS ON PATIENT ENDURANCE

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in Luke 8. In verse 15 we read, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy. The thought here is that to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept in his kingdom we must do more than to receive the Word of his testimony, even though we receive it with joy. It means more; for the stony ground class at first thus received it. For a brief time these seemed to give evidence of fruitfulness and vigor; but when the hot sun of persecution arose, they withered away, because of lack of depth of soil.

In this parable the Lord shows that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test of character. It follows after the receiving and the sprouting of the seed; it follows after love, hope, joy and faith have caused the seed to spring forth and begin to bear fruit. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be cheerful. We cannot suppose that he who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with his children, even when he saw them bearing much for his sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who thus endure surely would not be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment found expression in the words, "I delight to do thy will, O my God!" All of the royal priesthood are sacrificers, as was our great Chief Priest; and God who accepts our sacrifices through the merit of our dear Redeemer, informs us that he loves a cheerful giver—one who performs his sacrifices gladly, with a willing heart. This does not mean that our bodies will never grow weary; but that our spirit will rejoice in the privilege of suffering weariness of the flesh in so noble and wonderful a service. But if our Father should see best to lay us aside from active work for a time, when our hearts are longing to serve, this too will be an opportunity to endure cheerfully his will for us. It may also be a test of our full submission of our wills to his, and thus be an important stepping-stone upward toward the kingdom glories and privileges.

The other instance in which the Lord used this word patience, or patient endurance, is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling his followers that they must expect tribulations as the result of being his disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, when Satan is the prince of this world. They must expect opposition from various quarters; but he as-

sured them that nevertheless they would be fully under divine care and protection, even though persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then followed the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful constancy] possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19.

Our faith and and our trust in the Lord and his gracious promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the opposition of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants. So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of his providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious temple which he is constructing, and which is now so soon, we believe, to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as new creatures, even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to whom God has given the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, or by anything that man can do unto us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting every experience that he permits to come to us as ministrations of his providence for our ultimate good and his glory.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE

Let us here examine carefully into the reason why it is necessary for us to develop this grace of patient endurance. It appears that the development of this quality is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom, and one of the same conditions required of him. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial kingdom, in joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son of God, our great Redeemer. That will be a mighty work; and it is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom he shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate his goodness and his glorious character, and prefer his service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to his will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material with the brilliancy of the real diamond; and suppose that they became hard, but not so hard as the genuine diamond. Would these imitation diamonds have the value of the true diamond? By no means. If they were subjected to severe pressure, they would be crushed. And so with the Christian. If we supposed him possessed of every grace of character that could belong to the sons of God, save this one of firmness, endurance, he would not be fit to be amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence we see the necessity of the Lord's demand that patient, cheerful endurance shall be a characteristic of each one who shall be accepted to a place in his royal diadem.

The importance of this quality in the Christian character is again emphasized by the Apostle Paul. In his Epistle to Titus (2:2), when enumerating the character-qualities of an advanced Christian, he declares that they must be "vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience." The final test of patient endurance must be passed before we can be accepted as of the very elect.

The same Apostle in writing to Timothy thus reminds him, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patient endurance." We need this important grace more and more as we speed along on our race course and near the end of the way. Feet grow weary; trials and testings abound; therefore we need to "gird up the loins of our mind" and looking to our great Exemplar for the needed inspiration and strength, to set our faces like a flint for the home stretch.

TRIALS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL

Our ability and strength to patiently endure should increase as we progress in the narrow way. We should grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." But we cannot possibly develop this essential trait of character without trials—experiences intended to call for the exercise of cheerful endurance. So let us not think it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to bear. But let us repeat that the virtue is not merely in the bearing; for the world has much to bear, but it is particularly in the manner in which we endure. At heart we must be sweet and submissive—in the fullest harmony with the Lord's processes of development. This may be hard at times; but his grace will be sufficient, if we constantly apply for it. "Having done all," let us "stand!"

Ah, yes! We can see a new reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as our Master had his—under an evil environment—that we might not only have all the necessary qualities of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

The Apostle James likewise draws our attention to the importance of this quality. He says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience"; that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work out in our character this patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the kingdom. Thus we see clearly what a great mistake has been made among Christian people in general in supposing that religion is a thing to be gotten suddenly as an answer to prayer, or by going to the mourner's bench, or by standing up for prayers, or in response to some divine or human appeal—just as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, the step of repentance from sin and justification is only the beginning, and not the end, of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this also is far from the end. Not only must we go on and on, to the attainment of faith, fortitude, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must patiently endure. We must "run with patience [cheerful endurance] the race set before us." Or, to use another figure of speech, it is merely starting in the school of Christ; merely having our names enrolled as pupils, to be taught of the Lord.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

The church of the Philadelphia period were promised of the Lord that because of their faithfulness, because they had "kept the Word of my patience," they should be kept from "the hour of temptation" which was to come upon all the world a little later. The church of Laodicea—the church of our day—is not kept from entering into the "hour of temptation"; but we may be sure that we will be kept while in it, if we are faithful and true. Our dear Lord's special message to the Laodicean phase of the church has been, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Revelation 3:20, 21.

Though we are not spared from this hour of temptation, we have a counterbalancing blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia.* We may have his instruction, his dispensing to us of spiritual food, "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree never before enjoyed by his saints. And, as we might expect, this great favor is offset by the subtle and severe trials and testings of this special "hour of temptation." If there was ever a time when patient endurance was needed by the Lord's faithful, it is now. If ever they needed the counsel, "In your patience possess ye your souls," they need it now. Those who are able to patiently endure will stand in this evil day. All others will fall. As the Apostle forewarned us, the fiery ordeals of this day "will try every man's work, of what sort it is."

We find this quality of patient endurance lacking everywhere throughout Christendom today, even among the majority of the professed followers of Christ. It is becoming more and more scarce. Few wish to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, or for any one else's sake; and if endurance of anything unpleasant is absolutely necessary, the trial is borne with much of impatience, complaint and chafing. Moreover, a spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind.

This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ. This special grace, needed today by the Lord's children, will be withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord, following in the footsteps of Jesus. It is because the professed followers of Christ are living so far from him that we see today the tendencies are devel-

* Any one interested in the Scriptural evidence that our Lord has now returned in the manner foretold, as "a thief in the night," will be sent the "Parousia" booklet, upon receipt of 6c in stamps with name and address. Direct request today to THE WATCH TOWER, Brooklyn, N. Y.

oping which we have noted amongst those who profess his name.

This spirit so prevalent is at the bottom of mob violence which is kept down largely by military force, in the outbreaks against law and order which we hear of so frequently. We may expect this spirit to continue to grow. There is a feeling amongst the masses that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive—the feeling that if they had taken things into their own hands long ago present conditions might have been averted. But those who have kept the Lord's Word of patient endurance, who have sought from him the wisdom from on high, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and of good fruits," have learned that he has a due time in which his purposes shall be accomplished and they are willing to abide his time patiently, knowing that it is best. They have learned that

"God's plans, like lilies white, unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the hidden heart of gold."

ONE OF SATAN'S SPECIAL DECEPTIONS

The Apostle counsels us respecting this "hour of temptation" which is now upon us. Its besetments and trials will be many, and some of them will be so subtle and deceptive that all who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the truth will be carried away by the false arguments of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all those who dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

Amongst these subtle theories of the adversary, none seems more deceptive than Christian Science, falsely so called; for it is neither Christian nor scientific. Backed by the power of the evil one, it is able to promise its dupes that if they will affirm an untruth, and stick to it, they shall have relief and cure of certain ailments and bodily afflictions. Those who have not learned to endure patiently all that the Lord permits them to experience in the way of pain and sickness—all that cannot be relieved by rational and reasonable methods—will be ready to accept almost any relief which the adversary may bring to their attention. And as they learn to deceive themselves in respect to pain and sickness ,and gradually to pervert words from their real meaning, and to ignore and deny facts, they become in time so confused in their minds that truth appears to them to be falsehood, and falsehood appears to be shining truth.

SOME BEING FREED BY THE TRUTH

These deluded ones are led into this deception partly through curiosity. It seems so strange to them to hear one say, "There is no death; all is life! There is no pain; all is health! There is no evil; all is good!" They say to themselves, "These statements are certainly very inconsistent, yet I am curious to know how people reason them out. What is their philosophy?" This is just what the adversary desires. He wishes thus to attract their attention, that step by step he may lead them from one falsity to another, until the whole brain and conscience are subverted. They have accepted darkness for light, lies for truth. For this they are rewarded with physical relief—small recompense!

This is the reward of selfishness, of unwillingness to suffer anything they could escape by any means. They preferred their own way, the way most attractive to the fallen flesh. They chose this rather than the truth, which did not appeal to their flesh. They were ready to exchange the testimony of the Lord for the sake of physical ease and comfort, or to satisfy morbid curiosity. Thus they escaped troubles and pain which, if endured patiently and joyfully, would have worked out for them blessing and strengthening of character. Some who have been thus enslaved by the great adversary, a very few, are being freed by the power of the truth at this time. But it is a very difficult task to be thoroughly accomplished. In some cases the experiences undergone in the efforts to break the bonds so tightly binding them have been very painful, and accompanied by buffetings from the evil one and his hosts, who have so long held them in bondage. But it is well worth the struggle and the pain to be free from all such slavery.

ST. PAUL'S PICTURE OF PRESENT CONDITIONS

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all, for all of Christendom are not upon the same plane—mentally, morally or physically. The trial as it is coming upon Christendom in general, however, is pictured by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. He here enumerates certain characteristics of this "hour of temptation." He says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves—covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [those who cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

This is a graphic picture of present-day conditions in the Christian world, so-called. Because they received not the truth in the love of it, therefore God has sent them "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie," and should be condemned thereby. This hour of temptation has not yet reached its greatest intensity, but we believe this stage will be reached in a very short time. Blessed are all they who have made the Lord, "even the most High, their habitation." These shall not be moved; yet many of them will pass through most severe trials and temptations. Through the mails we learn of the struggles and prayers of many of God's children—some because of their own imperfections and frailties, and some because of the imperfections of others; and still others are tried because of earthly cares and burdens which they seem unable to fully overcome or to cast upon the Lord.

LET US HAVE THE PROPER FEAR

We sympathize with these dear ones, and counsel them as best we can, remembering the Master's words, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." (Luke 6:21) Our heart is especially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not—who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches"—whose love for the truth seems to be growing cooler instead of hotter, and who seem to feel less and see less than they did years ago. These seem to be sleeping when they should be watching and praying; and this hour of trial, we fear, is finding them unprepared; while some who are weeping, praying and striving are more like our dear Master in Gethsemane; and like him, they will be strengthened for the final trial.

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other, and counting the prize held out to us as far dearer and more precious than all else besides, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's dear children that their welfare will be our chief concern; and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not allow our love even for the brethren to hinder our fullest confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in the choice of his bride, even though siftings should take from us some whose fellowship we have cherished.

Let us patiently hold on our way—this blessed way! Let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Soon will come the Harvest Home! Soon, if faithful, we shall gather, as a glorious company, to go out no more forever. We shall come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us! But let us remember that "we have need of patience, that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise!"—Hebrews 10:36.

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!

* * * *

"Then peace, my heart! and hush, my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast;
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest!"

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CONTROL

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city which is broken down and without walls."—Proverbs 25:28.

The word "spirit" is used in a variety of ways. We speak of a horse as having a fiery spirit or as having no spirit. We speak of the angels as being spirits. We sometimes speak of the spirit of life. We also speak of the spirit of the human mind—that is evidently the thought that is here presented. The words of the text are equivalent to saying, He that hath no rule over his own mind, his thoughts, is like a city that is broken down.

What would a broken-down city be like? In olden times, when civilization had not reached the degree to which it has now attained, there was but little police protection, and marauders were numerous. Those who were disposed to get their

living by stealing had excellent opportunities. It was necessary that cities be surrounded by walls as a protection against enemies. Any city with broken-down walls would have great reason to fear such marauders. It would invite attack and be certain to meet with disaster some time.

The wise man has here likened such a city to a broken down human will. The will is to be continually on guard over the mind and to allow nothing to enter there except through the regular gates—conscience and judgment. These gates are to be watched so closely that they may admit only such thoughts as would be non-injurious, profitable, wise—in harmony with the Word of God. Every human being should have a will and should keep it in good repair, should see to it that it does not get broken down; otherwise shipwreck of character will follow.

By the will is not meant merely a wish. There is a decided difference between a wish and a will. Some wish that they possessed a million dollars, but they have not the will even to try to get it. Some have a wish to get up at a certain hour in the morning; but the wish does not get them up, because the will is broken down. They say to themselves, "Oh, a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands in sleep!" They have no control of themselves. They may think they will gain this control by setting an alarm clock. By and by the alarm clock does no good; they do not hear it at all.

CONTROL IN SMALL THINGS GAGE OF CHARACTER

Whoever allows his will to become broken down as to the time he will arise in the morning has a more or less weak will in all matters. We should make reasonable regulations for our time of rising and of retiring. Having used our best judgment as to what should be done, we should see that it is done. Unless the doing of this should be found harmful to ourselves or to someone else, it should be carried out.

It is important to carry out the dictates of our best judgment so that the will may be strong, so that the individual may not be a vacillating character. The same principle applies to our choice of food. Some will say, "I know that this dish does not agree with me; but it comes to the table, and it seems to agree with others. I cannot eat it without subsequent discomfort; but I like it. I wish it would not come to the table!" So he partakes of it and suffers the consequences. He has the desire for the food, but not the will to resist taking it. The proper course for each one is to see to it that he does not eat what he knows is injurious to him, whatever others may be able to do or may choose to do.

Indecision and lack of character in little things affect all the greater things of life. The person who gets up irregularly is apt to be irregular in business. The person who cannot determine what he should eat is likely to be subject to caprice, to be weak in all his decisions. Such a one will be likely to let some salesman influence him as to what he will buy. Some are too largely subject to the control of others.

A FIRM WILL—NOT OBSTINACY—ESSENTIAL

An old adage has it that "A wise man sometimes changes his mind—a fool, never." Ruling our own spirit does not mean that we are to go to extremes and say, "Well, I said I wouldn't; and I won't!" There may be good reasons for changing our mind, and then it would be our proper course to make that change. God is seeking for the class of people who properly rule their own minds. If they learn to rule their minds before they come into the family of God, it will be that much the better for them. But at any rate, the only way they can get into the kingdom will be by developing character.

The Bible tells us particularly what things are of the flesh, and what are of the holy Spirit, the holy mind, of God; what things, therefore, constitute the holy disposition we should have. It tells us that we should put away anger, malice, hatred, bitterness, wrath, anger, strife; and that we should put on meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These lessons must be learned. We cannot say that the flesh will ever be brought under complete control; but the will must be there, and as much control of the flesh as is possible by divine help should be added day by day.

The Lord is seeking people of strong will, strong character. Therefore there must be a positive turning to the Lord and a definite covenant with him at the first, or else we are not acceptable to the Father. Then after we come into his family we find that some things that we thought all right are all wrong and must be corrected; and in proportion as we have in our past life ruled our own minds, controlled our fleshly appetities and impulses, in that proportion we shall make slow or rapid progress in the new way. How much of consecrated time may we use for business, for pleasure, or in one way or another? How much of consecrated money shall we spend on ourselves? All this is to be regulated by our covenant with God. We must seek first the interests of the Lord and his kingdom. These must be first in all our arrangements, and earthly things must be secondary. Hence the importance of fixed character, a will prompt and unflinching for God.

"JEHOVAH IS MY SHEPHERD"

APRIL 18.—PSALM 23.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PSALMS—THE MOST TOUCHING OF THEM ALL—DAVID A SHEPHERD—HIS INTEREST IN HIS SHEEP—SUGGESTIVE OF THE HEAVENLY SHEPHERD'S INTEREST IN HIS FLOCK—HIS SHEEP SHALL NOT LACK—HE GIVES THEM REST—HE FEEDS THEM—HE REFRESHES THEM WITH WATER OF LIFE—HE RESTORETH MY SOUL—HE LEADETH ME—EVEN THROUGH THE DARK VALLEY I WILL FEAR NO EVIL—HIS ROD AND HIS STAFF—HIS TABLE FOR HIS PEOPLE—THE ANOINTING HE GIVES—GOODNESS AND MERCY EVER.

"Jehovah is my Shepherd."—Psalm 23:1.

It is safe to say that no other collection of poems has accomplished as much good as the Book of Psalms. Its sentiments seem to touch the soul at every turn—in joy, in sorrow. Referring to the Twenty-third Psalm, Beecher wrote, "It is the nightingale among the Psalms. It is small, of a homely feather, singing shyly out of obscurity; but it has filled the air of the whole world with melodious joy"; and Spurgeon said, "This is the Pearl of Psalms, whose soft and pure radiance delights every eye."

Only the people of God, in covenant relationship with him, can properly appreciate this Psalm and apply its gracious sentiments to themselves. The Psalmist David could do this, because he belonged to the favored nation which God had taken into covenant relationship with himself at Mount Sinai. The Israelites had covenanted to walk in the Lord's way and to obey his statutes; and God in turn had covenanted with them that he would, in proportion as they would do this, bestow his blessing upon their every interest. And perfect obedience to that covenant and its law would have been rewarded with everlasting life. We see, as the Apostle explains, that such a complete obedience was impossible. "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in thy sight."

Comparatively few of the Jews even did their best to live up to the requirements of the law; but the Prophet David evidently was one of these, however far short he came of perfection; for the Lord declared him "a man after his own heart." If he made failures, he confessed them, repented, received his punishment, and rejoiced in restoration to the Lord's favor, striving the more in the future to maintain his fellowship with God. It is interesting for us to note the kind of man with whom the Lord is well pleased—the kind of sheep in which the Great Shepherd is interested. And of this same class, of course, were others—the prophets and lesser personages—all who endeavored to live godly.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK

In an important sense this Psalm is applicable to our Lord Jesus and his church. All the features of the Psalm are applicable to our Redeemer himself as well as to his followers, whom he styles the sheep of his flock. To his church he is the Representative of the Father, so fully, so completely, that he could say truthfully, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." No human being could see the Heavenly Father and live, as the Scriptures declare; and those who saw and understood Jesus to be the Son of God, caught the best possible glimpse of the Heavenly Father. And so we all see Jesus as the representative of the Father, the Son of the great King, the Son of the great Shepherd, Jehovah.

Jesus and his church are more particularly the sheep of Jehovah's flock than were the Israelites of the Jewish age; for the relationship of the Jews was through Moses, while the relationship of the church is through Christ and the superior covenant which centers in him. It is well that we see this clearly; else how could we know whether or not we might apply the gracious sentiments of this Psalm to ourselves? It would not be right for a worldly person to apply this Psalm to himself. He would be deceiving himself; for he is not one of Jehovah's sheep. Nothing is more clear than this. Jesus declared that there is only one way of entering the sheepfold;

namely, through the door. And he declared himself to be the Door.

By nature we are sinners under Jehovah's sentence of death, and not his sheep. He has purposed a great plan for the world in general, which will begin to operate as soon as Messiah's kingdom is established. However, in the interim he is receiving special sheep—during this Gospel age; and Jesus tells how, saying, "If any man will come after me [be my disciple, my follower, my sheep], let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Self-denial is the first step—self-renunciation, giving up of the will to God. The covenant reads, "Gather my saints together unto me; those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." All who would be the Lord's sheep must make this Covenant of Sacrifice; it is the condition under which they may be accepted.

Moreover, as the Jews could come only through their appointed mediator, Moses, so we can come into this higher sheepfold only under the antitypical, greater Moses, Christ. There is none other name given. Once having taken this step, once having come into the sheepfold by the Door—in the approved manner—we have the message of God, saying, "All things are yours; for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." What this means is described in this Psalm.—1 Corinthians 3:22, 23.

ALL WANTS ABUNDANTLY SUPPLIED

The Lord's sheep, abiding in perfection of relationship with him, will lack nothing. Their every need will be supplied. This may not mean greater earthly wealth or name or fame or luxury. The Lord's sheep are new creatures, spirit beings, who are temporarily dwelling in the flesh like other people, but who really are waiting for their change, to be completed by a share in the first resurrection. The Lord's blessings to natural Israel were earthly blessings, supplying their every earthly need; but his blessings to spiritual Israel are spiritual favors. "No good thing will he withhold" from these—yea, even chastisements and sorrowful experiences that may be necessary for their spiritual development.

The Psalm assures us that, as the Lord's sheep, we shall be provided with green pastures and the cool, refreshing waters of truth. Moreover, while thus being spiritually fed and refreshed, we shall have the peace of God, as is implied in the suggestion that the sheep will lie down in the green pastures. But alas! Not all of the sheep have full confidence in the Shepherd and are fully resigned to have no will but his. Some are continually getting into difficulty, because they neglect the green pastures and cool, refreshing waters of truth found in the Word of God—because, goat-like, they sometimes wander off into the desert, straying far from the Shepherd and attempting to feed themselves on the indigestible things of the present life, on which no spiritual nature can thrive.

Yet even such straying sheep the Shepherd will not leave, if they have become truly his. He goes after them, as the Psalm represents. His rod and his staff are their comfort. With the rod he beats off their enemies, the wolves that would injure; and with the crook of his staff he wisely and carefully assists the entangled sheep out of its difficulties—out from amongst the cares of this life, the entanglements and deceitfulness of riches, and the besetments of sin and of Satan. Many of the sheep of the Lord's flock thus can sing, "He restoreth my soul"—He brings me back to himself; he makes me again to know, to appreciate, to enjoy his provision for me and to see how much better it is than anything I could have provided for myself.

A further experience is next brought to our view—the Shepherd's leading. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." He causes me, even by my own stumblings and difficulties, to learn to appreciate the desirableness of his ways and the undesirableness of every other way. All his ways are perfect, are righteous. He leads us not contrary to our wills, but in harmony therewith, to prove what is the good, next the acceptable, and finally the perfect will of God.—Romans 12:2.

THE VALLEY OF DEATH'S SHADOW

All of our lives we have been in the shadow of this great valley of death. Only father Adam was ever on the mountaintops of life. He lost his footing there, and descended gradually the slopes into this valley of the shadow of death. We, his children, were all born here. We are dying daily; we are surrounded by dying conditions. We have merely the hope that the Lord will lead his sheep back to the heights of life. He is now leading his sheep of this Gospel age—the church, the body of Christ. By and by he will lead the world, during his Millennial kingdom; as he declared, "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also must I bring, . . . and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."—John 10:16.

"Oh, sometimes the shadows are deep,
And rough seems the path to the goal!"

The end of this valley of shadow is near, not merely in the sense that we shall soon reach the end of life's journey, but especially in the sense that the new day is about to dawn, of which the Lord, our Shepherd, declared the result: "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." (Malachi 4:2) The final result will be that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; but the whole world will begin to emerge from the valley of the shadow of death. For a thousand years they will be rising again to the glorious heights of human perfection from which Adam fell, and the right to return to which is secured for all by the death of Jesus, "the just for the unjust."

THE CHURCH'S BETTER TABLE

But this precious Psalm seems especially to apply to the church, as we have said. Thus we appropriately read that the Lord's people of the present time have an especially prepared table, where they may partake even in the presence of their enemies. That will not be true in the future; for no enemies nor anything to hurt or injure shall then be permitted. (Isaiah 11:9) But how true it is that the Lord's consecrated people, even when misunderstood, misrepresented, defamed and opposed, are still privileged to feast at the Lord's table! The table represents God's provision for their needs—the promises of God, the assurances of his favor, etc.

Another evidence that the Psalm belongs especially to the church of this age is the statement, "Thou anointest my head with oil." Jesus, the Head of the church, was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. That holy anointing oil used on the priests and kings of Israel typified the holy Spirit, which came upon the church representatively in Jesus. And this same anointing oil has come down over all the members of the church, which is the body of Christ, as we read in Psalm 133:2.

THE CUP BOTH SWEET AND BITTER

"My cup runneth over." The word cup is used in the Scriptures to represent a draft, sometimes sweet, sometimes bitter, sometimes both. The intimation is that the Lord's cup signifies bitter experiences and trials in the present time; as Jesus said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" And this was the cup—his cup—which he offered to his disciples and which we, in becoming his disciples, propose to share with him, and which is symbolically represented in the communion cup.—1 Corinthians 10:15-17.

It is sweet and precious, in many senses of the word to be privileged to participate in the sufferings of Christ, in any sacrifices or services for the Lord and his Cause. The sweet mingles freely with the bitter. But the Lord promises that in the future the cup of new wine in the kingdom shall more than compensate for any bitterness of the present time. Our cup is full, but we would not wish it one drop less.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." How precious the thought—God's goodness, God's mercy, with all those who are truly his in Christ—following us day by day, moment by moment, and according to the Scriptures making all things work together for our good! Then the grand finale is signified, "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever"—in the heavenly house, of which the Redeemer said, "In my Father's house are many mansions; . . . I go to prepare a place for you," and "I will come again and receive you unto myself." Then, at his second coming, with our glorious change, we shall enter the Father's house in the fullest sense of the word, on the spirit plane, which flesh and blood does not inherit.

This shall be the everlasting portion of God's elect—the church. The great blessings subsequently to come to the world—earthly blessings—will in no sense interfere with, but enhance, the glory of the church; for she will be engaged with her Lord in dispensing blessings to the earthly sheep.—Galatians 3:29.

PREACHERS BACK OF MALICIOUS ATTACK

Attacks now being made upon Pastor Russell in various newspapers were intended to have commenced November 1. However, the war, so closely coinciding with the presentations of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, temporarily intimidated those intent upon the assassination of his reputation. The great war threatened disaster here through financial complications which pressed everybody for awhile. The National Banking Reserve arrangement gave temporary relief, and shipments of grain at

high prices have greatly stimulated business. Pastor Russell's enemies no longer fear in "looking after those things coming." Instead, they say, "This is only what the world has had before, but is on a more gigantic scale; it is not the prelude to Armageddon that Pastor Russell claims. All things will continue as they were. Our institutions will prosper and will not be swamped in anarchy, as he declares the Scriptures to teach."

This boldness of feeling leads to aggressiveness. The preachers have approached some of the prominent newspapers. Newspaper men, not specially religious, are deceived by the preachers into supposing that there is something substantial in their claims. They wish to curry favor with the preachers, and improve the opportunity of hitting somebody when there is a religious excuse for so doing. As the Master foretold, they are saying "All manner of evil falsely" against the Pastor. This is for Christ's sake in the sense that it is to injure the Pastor's work, to hinder it—because he is telling the truth; because the people are hearing the truth, and therefore their shackles of ignorance and superstition are falling, their eyes of understanding are opening, and the lost key of knowledge is coming into their hands.

We need not repeat explanations of matters nineteen years old and every way honorable and creditable to the Pastor, when rightly understand. But we should, perhaps, explain the latest device of the adversary. It has been published and re-published everywhere that the Pastor had "abducted Ruth Galbraith," seventeen years old; that he was holding her from her freedom; that a judge of a Philadelphia court had issued a writ of habeas corpus commanding the Pastor to bring Ruth before him; Ruth being heir to some money that the Pastor sought to get control of.

The whole matter is absolutely false from first to last. No judge ever issued such an order. Ruth Galbraith was neither abducted nor restrained of her liberty. With her mother's consent she visited her sister, Mrs. William Hollister, who is a member of the Bethel family. For a while she boarded and lodged in the neighborhood, but not in Bethel. Later, Pastor Russell was asked if Ruth might take her meals at Bethel. The explanation was made that Ruth was anxious to stay for a while in Brooklyn—that her health was not the best; that her brother had consumption; that Ruth's health demanded the change; that her mother had permitted her to come to Brooklyn on a visit; that meantime her monthly allowance from her father's estate had entirely stopped, and that she was without money to pay her board. The request was granted, she staying as the guest of her sister. Meantime Ruth's mother desired her return home, but Ruth refused to go. Called to Philadelphia in an endeavor to get her monthly allowance from the Executor, Ruth was accompanied by her sister and brother-in-law, William Hollister. Thereupon the mother's attorney obtained a writ of Habeas Corpus on Mr. Hollister, requiring him to produce his sister-in-law in a Philadelphia court.

The Pastor at no time had anything to do with Ruth's leaving home, nor with her remaining away from home, nor with any of her affairs.

Seeing how wonderfully the adversary can accomplish evil purposes, circulate falsehoods and find agents for these services, proves to us that Satan is not yet bound; and that he has little difficulty in finding human servants. (2 Corinthians 4:4; Romans 6:16) This fact should make us extremely skeptical respecting whatever we hear that is uncomplimentary to anybody. How do we know but that one-half, or more, of all the disreputable things mentioned in newspapers are as absolutely false and foundationless as this and other matters that appertain to Pastor Russell? We think it due to Pastor Russell and to the readers that this statement should appear in these columns, much as we dislike anything of a personal nature—always seeking to reserve these columns sacredly for the dissemination of the divine Word and its interpretation.

The slandering of God's people for righteousness' sake is represented in the burning of the "Lord's Goat" on the typical Atonement day. Whatever ignominy befalls one member of the body is shared by all. Whatever shame the Lord thus permits he could hinder; hence it must serve some good purpose—in testing our patience, love, loyalty, obedience, humility or what not. Let us not forget for one moment the Text for 1915—"The cup which my Father hath poured, shall I not drink it?"

"ARE YE ABLE?"

Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?
Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?

Are ye able to crush your soul's longing for love,
Will ye seek for no friendship save that from above?
Can ye pass through this world, lone, unnoticed, unknown,
While your faith faintly whispers, "He knoweth his own"?

Where the feet of the Blessed One stood, can ye stand?
Can ye follow his steps to a wilderness land?
Are ye able to cast aside pleasure and fame?
Can ye live but to glorify his precious name?

Can ye smile as his dear voice says tenderly "No,"
When "the field is so white," and your heart yearns to go?
Can ye rest then in silence, contented and still,
'Till your Lord, the Chief Reaper, revealeth his will?

Are ye able to lay on the altar's pure flame
That most treasured possession, your priceless good name?
Can ye ask of your Father a blessing for those
Who see naught in your life but to scorn and oppose?

When the conflict 'twixt error and truth fiercer grows,
Can ye wield the strong "sword" against unnumbered foes?
Can ye lift up the "standard" e'en higher and higher,
While his praises ye sing in the midst of the fire?

When ye see the Lord's cause going down to defeat,
Will your courage endure in the seven-fold heat?
Will your faith keep you steadfast, though heart and flesh fail,
As the new creature passes beneath the last veil?

Ah, if thus ye can drink of the cup he shall pour,
And if never the banner of truth ye would lower,
His beloved ye are, and his crown ye shall wear,
In his throne ye shall sit and his glory shall share!

G. W. S.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

"HE SHALL COME FORTH AND BLESS THE PEOPLE"

Question.—"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time." Who are these who will look for our Lord?

Answer.—The Apostle is here (Hebrews 9:28) tracing the work of Christ as the great High Priest. He represents our Lord as having offered the sin-offering, on the Day of Atonement, in its two parts—the bullock and the goat—and as being now in the Most Holy.* When he has accomplished his work, he will appear the second time—not to repeat any of the offerings of the Gospel age, not as a sin-offering—but he shall appear unto salvation, to all those who look for him. We can see that his words might apply to the church. They will know of his secondary appearance. They will have an appreciation of that fact before he will be revealed to the world. He will appear to them that look for him.

But we are to remember that our Lord's going into the Most Holy at the close of the antitypical Day of Atonement with the blood of the Lord's goat class, would indicate the death of that goat. The under priests will be with him, as members of himself. Then he shall come forth the second time, after this second presentation of the blood, not to offer a sacrifice—for the sacrificing will all be finished—but to bless the people.

Who then are these who look for him and to whom he will appear the second time, unto salvation? We answer that in the Time of Trouble, and subsequently, the whole world will begin to look for the Deliverer. All nations will be desiring him—not as a sin-offering again, but for their salvation. As mankind will get their eyes open to their need of salvation, they will be looking for this deliverance by The Christ in glory. They will never see him with their natural eyes. But they will look for him in the same sense that we now see Jesus—they will see him with the eye of faith.

THEY SHALL "FALL UPON THEIR FACES"

At that time many nations shall say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord's house. He will show us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." (Isaiah 2:3) Another Scripture assures us that, when he shall appear, we also, the bride class, shall appear with him in glory. It is after the sacrificing is all finished and the church glorified that he comes forth the second time unto salvation, saving and blessing all the people. The high priest in the type did not return into the Most Holy again, but lifted up his hands and blessed the peo-

*THE TABERNACLE SHADOWS OF THE BETTER SACRIFICES, an illustrated booklet of 131 pages, explains fully the interesting rites and ceremonies of the Hebrew Tabernacle in the wilderness and also throws a new refulgent light upon their typical signification. Send 6c in stamps for sample copy. Address THE WATCH TOWER, Brooklyn, N. Y.

ple. Then the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people, and the people gave a great shout and fell upon their faces. (Leviticus 9:23, 24) So the people of the world will prostrate themselves before the great Messiah. And this will be the work of Christ during the thousand years—uplifting mankind and giving them the benefit of the Atonement Sacrifice.

MANY CHRISTIANS NOT YET ENLIGHTENED

Question.—Is there any one at the present time outside of present truth who has the holy Spirit?

Answer.—There are various degrees of the Spirit of holiness which may be possessed by the child of God at various times in his experience. We may ourselves have more of the holy Spirit now than we have ever had before, implying that there was a time when we did not have so much. Or there may be some who have less, implying that they have not been growing spiritually, and are grieving the holy Spirit with which they were sealed.

We are not to think that all who are begotten of the holy Spirit are exactly on the same plane, in either their spiritual appetites or their development or their knowledge of God's plan. We grow in grace as we grow in knowledge. If our measure of grace lessens, the knowledge begins to fade. The more grace we have, the more understanding is ours. As a matter of fact, the whole world has been laboring under such delusions that we are surprised, when we "wake up," to see how little we did know—to see how ignorant we were of some of the precious messages God has given us.

And as we were children of God before we received full knowledge, so we believe it is possible for others to be children of God without having the full knowledge. We are living in the end of the harvest time, when, we believe, the Lord is causing the knowledge of the truth to encircle the world. And yet the adversary is raising "dust," calumny, to hinder the people from appreciating it.

It is in very rare cases that God does as he did with Saul of Tarsus—strike him down with a great light, brighter than the sun at noonday. And it is because we believe that there are still children of God attempting to live on husks and skimmed milk—that there are such brethren in Christ who need the assistance we are able to give them—that we are trying to help them. Otherwise we would abandon all special effort at propaganda, knowing that there will be favorable conditions for all as soon as the kingdom shall be established.

The Bible speaks of the great company class as the "great multitude," as though the foolish virgin class were larger than the wise virgin class. And the Scriptures indicate that the great company class will not all have fled from Babylon before its overthrow. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." This call has been going out for now thirty-seven years. It is God's call.

The Scriptures show us that some will come out, and others will not come out, will not be released from Babylonish fetters. These foolish virgins will see that their lack of love and zeal has lost them a place in the bride class. But they are virgins, nevertheless, and will have a place, or portion, as the companions of the bride. They will follow her into the King's palace. They will be bridesmaids, if you please—a position of lesser honor; but they will attain everlasting life. So we have reason to believe that the numbers of God's people begotten of the holy Spirit and still in Babylon are considerable. If we were in their place and they in our place, we feel sure that they would make heroic efforts to help us out of Babylon; so we are doing likewise.

HOW FAR SHALL WE SACRIFICE LEGITIMATE PLEASURES?

Question.—What are the rights and privileges of the flesh—not sinful—which are to be sacrificed by the new creature in Christ Jesus?

Answer.—There are certain rights and privileges which belong to all human beings. There are tastes and desires that are not sinful. It is not sinful to eat and enjoy that which is wholesome and nutritious; not sinful to have preferences as to what one shall eat. It is not sinful for one to have strawberries in the winter when that fruit is expensive, if one has the money to buy them and if he obtained the money rightfully. It would not be sinful to pay fifty cents or a dollar a box for them. It is no crime to have a fine house, servants, a pleasure yacht, an automobile, etc. If there are entertainments, concerts, operas, and these are of good moral tone, one has a perfect right to engage a seat for the same at five dollars, and to employ a taxicab in going. One as a natural man has a perfect right, if he is able, to any of these things, which are not sinful in themselves. Things that are sinful should, of course, always be avoided.

But when one undertakes to become a follower of Christ, he accepts instead of his own will the will of God. And as Christ pleased not himself, but used his time, his influence, his life, for the good of others, so those who become his disciples will forego their rights and privileges, whenever these would conflict with their service to God. The Christian could not reason the same as he did before he made his consecration. He could not say, I will spend five dollars to go to the opera; but he will be obliged to say, My means are consecrated to the Lord. The same principle will control his judgment as to whether he shall have an automobile or not; whether he shall have a fine house or shall own any house; whether he shall have the finest food; whether he shall wear fine clothing, or plainer clothing, etc. It will control his judgment as to his use of consecrated time.

But no one is to judge another in regard to the use of money or time in his possession as the Lord's steward. It is for the individual himself to decide how he will use these. And it is the Lord who will decide whether he has been a faithful steward or an unfaithful one. The Lord will decide that those who, like Jesus, shall sacrifice the enjoyable earthly things, that thereby they may the better glorify God, shall have the more than compensating spiritual blessings, and shall receive the reward of the kingdom and its positions of honor.

DAVID ANOINTED KING

[This article was a reprint of that entitled "The Lord Looketh on the Heart" published in issue of July 15, 1903, which please see.]

INTERESTING LETTERS

MORE VALUABLE THAN A YEAR IN COLLEGE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

The EUREKA DRAMA is now being shown here in one of the best halls of the city. Parts I. and II. have been shown already to a packed house each time, and an appreciative audience. Part III. is to be given tonight, D. V.; and request has been made for the hall, to give the three parts over again next week. Then later we expect to visit Trinidad, Grenada and other places of the West Indies. Follow up work is being planned for here, and a one-day local convention to be held next Sunday. I enclose a clipping from the *Advocate*. With much Christian love,

Yours in the Master's service, by grace.

ADDISON B. BLAKE.—Barbadoes, B. W. I.

The clipping follows:

"THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION"

The beautiful PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, being now exhibited in all the large cities of America and Great Britain, presents, in startling and instructive motion and colored pictures—scientific, historical and Scriptural—the results of years of labor. The DRAMA begins with pictures showing this world's creation and preparation, including Edenic scenes and Adam's transgression. Step by step the ages are traversed, and in marvelous imagery, in pictures based on Bible prophecies, is portrayed the perfect man of the future, in full possession and full enjoyment of the promised unending Earthly Paradise.

The PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION is shown free of all cost, under the auspices of the Associated Bible Students. This Association is backing and financing the DRAMA, which is supported by voluntary contributions. It has been well said that the four parts of the DRAMA and their lectures are more valuable than a year's course in college. Part I. traces Creation from star nebulæ to the Deluge and its causes, and onward to the time of Moses. Part II. begins with Moses and carries us down through the Bible record of Israel's experiences to Jesus' miracles. Part III. leads our minds from Hosanna, through the dark ages of ignorance, superstition and cruelty, down to and into the future age. The fame of the beautiful slides and films has reached far and wide.

There are so many loud calls for the DRAMA it is impossible to meet them all immediately. Therefore Stereopticon views, in three parts taken from the DRAMA, are also being used at present in connection with the phonograph, in the smaller cities and villages. We are glad to welcome the visit of the latter form of the DRAMA to Barbadoes, and hope to see the complete DRAMA in the near future. *Barbadoes Advocate.*

A "TRUTH" BABY

MY VERY DEAR PASTOR:—

I am sending my baby's photo to wish you the very happiest of new years; I hope and believe that the year will indeed "Ring in The Christ that is to be."

I think you may be interested in this baby's history, as it seems to prove your theory that "truth" babies are better than other ones. When my other children were born, my surroundings were much as you advocate in Volume VI. They are very good children, and the girl has recently consecrated herself to the Lord.

I think it was about fifteen months before my last dear child's birth that I read THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, rejoiced greatly and immediately gave myself to the Lord—as did my husband. During the interval before baby's birth, we moved twice—the second time into a tent, as no houses were available. City street improvements exposed me to the most terrific and incessant noises, and once, in blasting, the tent was thrown down without warning. Then we had a heavy snow which bore down our tent, compelling us to go out into two feet of snow, in the night! I tried to be "worth while" and smile when everything went wrong. The power of the truth was greater than I knew, for baby has the best nature of any of my children—he is really unselfish; people have remarked upon it to me.

When he was born I had another trial; his arm was paralyzed and hung helpless. I knew restitution was coming and although I found it hard to say, "Thy will be done," when I said it from my heart, that night the arm distinctly moved. It is now as the other. Hoping I have not taken too much of your time, I remain,

Your sister in Christ, ELEANOR I. CHILDE.—B. C.

"TOILS OF THE ROAD WILL SEEM NOTHING WHEN—"

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Greetings in our Redeemer's name! Ever since I read THE WATCH TOWER of Dec. 1, I have felt that I must write and tell you how much I appreciate it. The WATCH TOWERS are all rich, but this one seemed to impress me so much, and especially the first two articles—"SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN SONS OF GOD AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT," and "TEMPTATIONS, PECULIAR TO THE NEW CREATION."

Oh, how the dear Lord is blessing us with meat in due season for the household of faith, through that honored servant! I have so many things to be thankful for. Not long since husband and the children opposed me in the truth, thought mamma was foolish and really cranky about her religion; but now they are in sweet accord and are learning to love the Lord, the truth and the brethren, and you may know that I greatly appreciate the fact.

My trials have seemed very crushing of late, but I consider them all as blessings, and thank the Lord for all my experiences. It seems so natural for us to want every one to love us and to think and speak well of us. But we know that when we earnestly contend for "the faith once delivered to the saints" it cannot be. But how glad I am that I can suffer a little for him! The sufferings of this present time are nothing to compare with the glory that shall follow.

My only fear is that I shall not do my duty to the Lord. I know he is going to do his part. There are times when it seems he has hidden his face from me, but I know he is only seeing if I will trust him where I cannot trace him. And if I did not get my polishing in this way, it would have to come in some other; and the Lord certainly knows best.

Yours in His Service, MRS. HOMER GRUVER.

EUREKA DRAMA SUCCESS

DEAR BRETHREN:—

We are indeed rejoicing in the blessed privilege of service in the Eureka Drama work. The Heavenly Father is surely blessing us, and the public is very appreciative. We have been in the work about four weeks, and have served thirteen places and about 4,000 people.

At one place, after the third part, a dear brother's wife stated that she had made a full consecration of her all and desired to be immersed. **This was a cause of rejoicing for the dear brother, and all rejoiced with him.**

Of course, we are having some trials, but that only makes us the more determined to press on. With much Christian love to all,

I am your servant in Christ, JOS. ISAAC, JR.—Texas.

"I HAD SOUGHT THE WORLD AROUND, PEACE AND COMFORT NOWHERE FOUND"

A WATCH TOWER reader sends us the following interesting letter from a leading educator of Kentucky—a further evidence that a gleaning work is in progress:

MR. JAMES H. WARE,
———, Ky.

DEAR FRIEND:—

Hardly could you have more effectually surprised me, or more thoroughly pleased me, than you have in presenting me with this handsomely bound set of Bible Students' Helps.

I read (tried to read) the Bible through at 14 years. I tried it again at 44, and again made a prayerful effort at 55 to read the Bible and Apocrypha.

I also studied ten of the great religions, read many infidel authors and much materialistic philosophy; yet these six little volumes are clearly exhibiting to me more truth than I had discovered in all this study.

I can read any of the poets, philosophy, or deep-laid allegory; but I had failed to read the Bible so as to agree with current orthodoxy. And you may know how rejoiced I am that finally you have placed me in company with truth-seekers who discover to me vividly and fearlessly the ways of God that I in much fear had seen, because it seemed that no other corroborated my discovery.

I think I prize your present more highly than any gift I have ever received. Thanking you, W. H. PEPPER.—Ky.

AS TO SECURING HALLS FOR EUREKA DRAMA

DEAR FRIENDS:—

It may interest you to know of the method we have adopted for securing halls for the EUREKA DRAMA work. When we first started, some one would go ahead and secure halls in advance and advertise. This method, we found, had difficulties and was expensive.

Now we have adopted a different method, which seems thus far to have worked well, at small expense. We now make arrangements for halls by telephone, which costs, in most cases, not more than fifteen cents, and is sometimes free, according to distance. These arrangements are made not more than a few days in advance; then we move to our town or village in the morning and the first thing we do is to put up our posters and window cards, and advertise from house to house and in the rural districts through the schools. In the evening we have our show, and usually have crowds.

Yours in the Master's service, C. F. DUWE.—Ohio.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Information from Great Britain describes matters there as prosperous. Business flourishes, supported mainly by the orders for war materials for the Government, building of war vessels, etc. The streets have much the ordinary appearance, except that more black is worn by the women, as indicative of mourning, and more military uniform is to be seen.

Newspaper reports respecting the sinking of vessels by German submarines might give the impression that Great Britain is cut off from communication with the outer world and that few ships enter and leave her ports. Such, however, is not the case. Approximately three thousand vessels entered and left British ports last month, while only about four sustained injury from the German submarines. The good business condition and rise in the price of food are leading to labor troubles, strikes for shorter hours and better wages. The demands are being met very conservatively. Wages of British mechanics are still much below the American level.

Conditions in Russia, except in the war zone, are said to be good. The Government, which has for years had control of the liquor traffic, has entirely suppressed it. The effect upon the Russian people is said to be excellent, tending toward their enlightenment of mind and tending also, with the war demands for labor, toward their financial prosperity.

That part of France, which is outside of the war-zone, seems to be fairly prosperous also.

Germany, according to all accounts, is not nearly as badly off as we might suppose from press reports. The business of the country goes on with remarkable regularity, notwithstanding the war; nevertheless, lacking an outlet for her manufactures, German activities are mainly concerned with Government orders for war materials and home necessities. The food, being under Governmental control, is limited, but is said to be sufficient for the absolute needs of the people. All food supplies are being conserved, as in the case of a be-

sieged city. Clocks have been set forward one hour to favor earlier rising and earlier retiring, thus effecting the saving of petroleum.

Great suffering and distress is reported from the war-zone—Belgium, Northern France, Western Russia, Eastern Germany and the Carpathian and Balkan Mountains. These war-swept districts have suffered terribly—the fortunes of war sometimes sweeping one way, sometimes the other, but always with terrible severity, not only as respects the soldiers, but also the inhabitants of the districts. Conditions in Servia are said to be terrible also.

The Dardanelles, controlled by Turkey, constitute a new war area. Great Britain has long upheld the Turkish Government and hindered Russia from gaining access to the Mediterranean Sea and the world by water. Russia long ago would have devoured Turkey at great cost; for Constantinople would have given her one of the most important sea-ports in the world. Now England and France must help their ally, Russia. Since they cannot utilize Constantinople themselves, they are anxious that Russia shall not have it. They will propose that the Dardanelles be maintained a free waterway, like the Suez Canal and the Panama Canal. Whether or not this will satisfy Russia is doubtful; and a quarrel amongst the Allies may result. If a quarrel seem unavoidable, it may be determined that the Dardanelles are impregnable and Turkey be allowed to hold on to her possession.

Meantime the Allies are seeking for further assistance to blockade thoroughly and starve out Germany. To this end Italy and Greece are being urged to join in the war, the inducement being that in the settlement Italy shall receive certain Austrian Provinces and Greece be allowed to take over a large share of Turkey's domain—to keep Russia out. Selfishness, statecraft, fear of each other and ambition for world-power are thus seen to be the moving principles, so far as the world is concerned in the present war. Switzerland, Holland and Scandinavia are in fear and know not what to do. The interests of the great belligerents may force war upon them, although they are striving to the best of their ability to remain neutral.

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES AND THE WAR

At first, the influence of the war upon the people of Europe was terrifying. In their distress they were inclined to become more religious. With the progress of the war this spirit of fear and looking to the Lord for help is passing away, giving place to colder sentiments and greater self-confidence. War is becoming the business of life to those engaged in it. Each of the nations involved sees matters from its own viewpoint. Each honestly believes that it is right. Each has the courage of its convictions and is ready to die for them.

The Germans hold that the Allies, jealous of their frugality and prosperity and thoroughness, have long been preparing to crush them, to annihilate them. They claim that if they had waited until the French army had been mobilized on their western frontier, and the Russian army on their eastern frontier it would have been too late for Germany to successfully defend herself; that it was necessary for her to take the steps she did take and to take them with the promptness with which she took them, in order to strike first at France and then at Russia, whose soldiers represented double the number of her own.

The Germans feel a special bitterness toward the British, believing that they are at the bottom of the Alliance and its schemes for the destruction of Germany. The Kaiser is evidently sincere in the thought that he and his people are God's ordained agencies for the propagation of system, law, economy and prosperity throughout the world. The Germans believe their cause to be just and that surely they will succeed. It is freely declared by them that, should they not succeed, they would altogether doubt the existence of God.

The Allies, also, feel that God is for them. Germany's preparation of a great army, they claim, was not in self-defense and to protect her life, but for aggressive warfare upon her neighbors. They claim that Germany stands for militarism and that its successful military rule throughout the world, the rule of force, would be much more injurious than the rule of naval force. Whatever the leaders think and know as respects motives for the war, and whatever their conclusions respecting how it must end in the annihilation of Germany, the public undoubtedly believe that the cause of the Allies is every way just and must surely have God's favor and blessing. The Russians, we are told, are content that they are serving God while obeying the commands of the "Little Father," the Czar. They are content to die. They refer to going to the front and into the tomb as "Off for America." In other words, having a glimmering of a future life and refusing to take the doctrine of eternal torture seriously, they conclude that dying is like setting sail for an unseen country.

The French soldiers are taking the matter of warfare as light-heartedly as possible—much as one might take to a hunting expedition where the chances were recognized to be rather doubtful.

The great generals of the war are saying freely that the war is only beginning; that the Winter time has interfered with operations and that as soon as the Spring floods are past, the bitterest warfare ever yet known to the world may be expected.

Meantime, Japan finds the present a favorable opportunity for gaining the mastery of the yellow race—of mastering China. Her Allies, of course, would not approve of this course, but Japan well knows that they are powerless to interfere. As to the objections of the United States, they will not be worthy of consideration; for the distance across the Pacific is so great and the Japanese navy is more than a match for what United States war vessels could be spared for Far Eastern waters. It would, indeed, tickle Japanese pride to have a conflict with the United States navy in Eastern waters, where they would be so far from fuel and other supplies as to be defeated. It would put Japan in the front rank of "Christian Nations" and the Philippines could be her reward. The Allies probably would be pleased to see the United States humiliated and sharer with them in the weakening influences of the present warfare. Undoubtedly Germany also would be glad to see the United States involved in war, as it would hinder further supplies of war materials going to the Allies. If the United States shall keep clear of entanglements under all these conditions it will be marvelous, almost indicating a divine supervision of its affairs.

"MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR"

As it is, the United States, indeed all the countries of America, North and South, and all the world except the warring nations, are experiencing most peculiar conditions because of the financial disruption created by the war. Not only Canada, but also Central and South America, China, Australasia and India, have been financed in the past by the nations now at war; especially by Great Britain. Their bank balances and loans are all interfered with by the war and by the necessity on the part of the warring nations of using their capital at home. The United States is not financially powerful enough to meet the conditions and supply money to the remainder of the world, previously dependent on Europe. Indeed stocks and bonds to the amount of five thousand millions of dollars are held in Europe against American improvements, etc. As the war progresses and Europeans need money, they may be expected to sell these American securities in American Exchanges. We have not the money to thus pay our unmatured obligations. Already our banks are full to overflowing with stocks and bonds—some excellent, some medium value, some worthless. Consequently gold will probably go to a premium in the United States as it is already at a premium in Canada. This will bring great distress everywhere, in connection with the liquidation of maturing obligations, bonds, mortgages, etc. No wonder financiers are perplexed—"men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to those things coming on the earth"!—Luke 21:26.

THE WORLD'S DEBTS NEVER TO BE PAID

The London Economist roughly estimates the debts of the warring nations at the close of February as follows, in millions of Pounds Sterling. For a rough estimate in dollars, multiply by five:

(Expressed in Millions)

	——Debt——		Loss of	Total
	Old	New	Revenue	Debt
	£	£	£	£
Great Britain	661	312	nil	973
France	1,315	363	50	1,728
Russia	890	520	50	1,460
Germany	240	520	50	810
Austria-Hungary	490	363	50	903
Servia	26	26	4	56
Belgium	148	26	..	174

The article says: "In the case of the five leading belligerents, we take the National Debt before the war, and add our estimate of the war expenditure, and also an estimate of the loss of ordinary revenue, which must, of course, be added to the debt. The figures for Servia and Belgium are guesswork, and may be very wide of the mark. The figures for the belligerents will, we fear, prove well within the mark. Both the old and the new debts are a mortgage on the future industry of Europe. A population which will have lost a large percentage of its best workers will have to find much

larger annual sums than ever before in interest. In case of failure the State will have to pass into the hands of the receiver, and in its ruin great commercial and financial houses will be involved. We are all slaughtering one another's customers, and every week of international warfare spreads destruction among the fortunes of individuals. There is even a sense in which one may say the greater the success the greater the embarrassment. The debt of the German Empire, like the German Empire itself, is a new creation. The State debts of Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, etc., are, separate and together, much larger. Austria-Hungary, again, is not a unity like France. Suppose either Germany or Austria become dismembered by external force, or exploded by revolution, what becomes of their national or Imperial debts, or of the indemnities which the Allies might hope to exact? The more one looks into the financial and political future of Europe after the war the darker and more obscure do its problems appear. But that is all the more reason why independent men with knowledge and penetration and foresight should exercise their minds upon the political economy of this war. Never has there been such a collision of forces, never so much destruction in so short a time. Never has it been so difficult or so necessary to measure the calamity, to count the costs, to foresee and provide against the consequences to human society. Philanthropists profess to hope that the peace settlement will bring with it a great international reduction of armies and armaments, which will enable the nations to support their new war debt, and so to avoid the bankruptcy court. No doubt the fear of bankruptcy will count for something; otherwise the peace settlement might be expected to breed another series of preparations for another series of wars. But those who know the forces which really control the diplomacy of Europe see no Utopias. The outlook is for bloody revolutions and fierce wars between labor and capital, or between the masses and the governing classes of Continental Europe."

BIBLE STUDENTS AND THE FUTURE

In all the Continental armies our brethren, known as Bible Students, are to be found—not willingly, but by conscription. However opposed to the taking of life, they are subject to the powers that be in everything that does not conflict with conscience. Before the war we recommended to the brethren that in the event of hostilities they should, so far as possible, if drafted, request positions in the hospital service or in the supplies department, where they could serve the Government efficiently; whereas, if they were ordered to the firing line, they would not be obliged to shoot to kill. We have reasons for believing that these suggestions are being followed and that meantime the brethren are using the opportunities for proclaiming to their companions in military service the blessed message of the soon-to-be-established kingdom of Christ, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

We have exhorted the brethren to strict neutrality so far as the combatants are concerned, whatever might be their natural inclination through accident of birth or association. To Bible Students none of the belligerent nations are wholly in the right, and none of them entirely to blame. Let us more and more seek to take the Bible view of the great Armageddon, of which we are now having the prelude. It is the outgrowth of our civilization, developing in the soil of selfishness. We are seeing fruits which have been ripening for forty years.

We are never for a moment to forget that if the nations were Christian nations, as some of us once supposed, they would be bearing the fruits of the Spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, kindness, love. How great the mistake! Christendom—Christ's kingdom—has not yet been established. It awaits the Lord's time and the manifestation of his power and great glory in its establishment. These are kingdoms of this world, actuated by the principles of selfishness and deceived by Satan, "the god of this world."

The Battle of Armageddon, to which this war is leading, will be a great contest between right and wrong, and will signify the complete and everlasting overthrow of the wrong, and the permanent establishment of Messiah's righteous kingdom for the blessing of the world. All these things are probably easier to be seen from this side of the ocean than by the dear friends who are nearer to, and more directly influenced by, the war and their national, personal interests. Nevertheless, it is important that we all keep clearly before our minds that this is not the war of the church, but the war of the world with carnal weapons; and that our sympathies are broad enough to cover all engaged in the dreadful strife, as our hope is broad enough and deep enough to include all in the great blessings which our Master and his Millennial kingdom are about to bring to the world.

Meantime, another danger to the Lord's consecrated people lies along the lines of worldly-mindedness—neglecting the things of the kingdom in favor of the things of this present life. Our adversary is still alert. We, also, must be alert as children of the light, children of the day, soldiers of the cross. There never was a better opportunity than now for lifting high the royal banner of our Redeemer. More people have ears to hear and sharper ears to hear than ever before. Thousands are anxious for the message which we have to give them and which they do not find elsewhere—the message of hope, the message which explains that the present reign of evil, and the past six thousand years of the reign of sin and death, have reached their culmination, and how and why they are about to be brought to an end by the great Redeemer, in fulfilment of our Heavenly Father's glorious plans which he purposed in himself from before the foundation of the world.

SELL THE PHILIPPINES TO JAPAN

Two years ago, on our return from the Orient, we sent the below letter of suggestion to the Government with copies of it to the newspapers, some of which published the letter, which read as follows:—

Brooklyn, May 26, 1913.

Honorable Wm. J. Bryan,
Secretary of State, U. S. A.

Dear Sir:—I am addressing you, and through you the Honorable President of this Nation, and the Honorable Members of its Congress, upon a subject which I believe to be of prime importance to our Nation and to the world. I would have preferred to make this communication a private one, but believe that its object will be much better served if it be known at home and abroad that the suggestion comes from a native citizen, a minister and ambassador of Christ, rather than if the same suggestion were to emanate from some Official of our Government or from a politician.

THE WORLD'S PEACE ENDANGERED

A year ago I visited Japan and observed the congested conditions there prevailing, and learned that her population is increasing very rapidly, while every foot of arable land is under "intense" cultivation. Japan's need for room for her overflow population has already led her to grasp Korea, and it is no secret that she longs for possession of the Philippine Islands, and would be glad of a reasonable pretext for taking possession of them. Many broad-minded Americans have suggested that the United States has no desire to acquire colonies in an imperial sense, and that, therefore, the Philippine Islands should be surrendered to the Filipinos. The only objection urged against this move is that the Filipinos are not as yet sufficiently advanced in civilization to properly govern themselves. And those most intimate with the situation have not the slightest doubt that if the United States withdrew from the Philippines, the Japanese Government would immediately take control, and shortly the Philippine Islands would be inundated with Japanese—undoubtedly much to their benefit, as the latter people are more thrifty and prudent and energetic than the Filipinos.

SOME RADICAL SUGGESTIONS

I suggest that the United States Government select from amongst the Philippine Islands one island suitable as a naval base, and tender to Japan the opportunity to take over the Philippine Islands at precisely the same they have cost the United States. This would give our neighbors of the Far East exactly what they want, at no price at all compared with the cost of war. Additionally, it would make them our friends, and surely all Americans desire a world-wide friendship with all nations. I advise that this step be taken speedily, because there is a "jingo" party in Japan bent upon the acquirement of the Philippines, which party will always be ready to take advantage of such trifles as the California Alien Law to incite hatred against the United States and to force their Government, against its judgment, to seize the Philippines.

It is human nature for the Japanese to want those Islands —to feel that they need them. It is practical common sense to say that they can take them whenever they are ready. The United States could not retake the Philippines except at the expense of many lives and thousands of millions of dollars—if at all.

Our Japanese neighbors, flushed with their victory over the Russian Navy, and courageous and proud-spirited, anyway, realize fully their ability to capture the Philippines and probably to hold them; but they do not realize that a war with America would be a very different one from that with Russia—that American pride and valor would spend thou-

sands of lives and thousands of millions of dollars rather than surrender to Japan. Pride, courage, self-esteem, confidence, on both sides are the real dangers. Surely wisdom should dictate to both nations that, in the interest of peace, cause for friction should be as far as possible eliminated. I believe that no more fair, no more just, no more honorable method for adjudicating this matter can be found than that we are suggesting—the sale of the Islands at cost to the Japanese.

Japan would give the Filipinos a splendid government—better, I believe, than would any other nation under the sun except our own Government. No one can visit the Philippines without feeling pride for what America has done for that people—and done in so unselfish and noble a manner, as an elder brother amongst the nations helping a younger brother. Under no circumstances would I favor turning the Philippines over to the domination of a barbaric people. The Japanese are not barbarians, but highly civilized.

My discourse in Washington on the 25th, "Peace Desirable, War a Necessity," was evidently misunderstood by some of my peace friends. While I claimed that nations have never been able to avoid war, and that they never will be able to wholly avoid it until the inauguration of Messiah's kingdom, nevertheless I believe that all lovers of peace should unite their hearts and voices and pens and every energy in removing all unnecessary friction between nations, by doing in advance those things which would make for peace, and by promoting them. For instance, if the move I am suggesting were delayed until the Japanese had made an attack upon the Philippines, it would be too late. American pride would never consent to an overture of sale under stress; nor would the Japanese probably be willing to purchase then. NOW seems to be the psychological moment, and, as stated at first, it seems best that these suggestions should come from an ambassador of Christ, rather than from a politician of any party, so that partisan feeling may not interfere, but our nation as a whole approve and uphold and carry speedily forward this peace-promoting measure. I call for its endorsement by peace societies and all who believe that war should be only a last resort.

Faithfully yours,
A servant of the Lord Jesus Christ,
(Signed) C. T. RUSSELL.

JEWISH PALESTINE EMIGRATION

The following is a synopsis of an article which appeared in the *Algemeen Handelsblad* of March 6, 1915, published in Amsterdam:

"In Jewish circles the Jewish question is believed to be nearing a crisis. Poland, one of the countries suffering most from the present war, has millions of Jewish citizens. They are mainly artisans and commissionmen, and have with many others practically lost their all. While others have the hope of recuperating after the war is over, the Jews see none because of a strong Polish boycott of Jews. Already articles appear in the Russian press and in the English press, as Russia's ally, expressing the wish that Jews be obliged to emigrate from Poland after the war.

"Since Palestine has become part of the war-territory, the antagonism in the Jewish world against Zionism is disappearing, all seeming to be actuated by greater love for the Land. Conditions in Palestine are not what the news items, mainly from English sources, would cause one to think. The Turk is more favorable to the Jewish inhabitants than to those of other nationalities. When a local official tried to hinder the Zionists he was sharply reprimanded from Constantinople. The German, Italian and especially the United States representatives have contributed a great deal to bring about the good will of the Turk for the Jews. On Dec. 17 the Jaffa officials had 600 Russian Jews transported to Egypt, but the same day the United States representative, Mr. Morgenthau, brought influence to bear on Constantinople which caused the transportation of Jews, citizens of countries at war with Turkey, to be stopped; and now they are permitted to remain, although watched by the authorities. It seems now that even the Anglo-Palestine Company at Jaffa, the Zionist Bank, will be allowed to continue its business. Economically Palestine is suffering. Although the model-farms and the reforesting enterprises are still going on as usual, the individual owners of orange groves and vineyards are suffering on account of the cessation of export trade. Besides, there is practically no import, causing unemployment. But those who are well informed are hopeful for the future, the present need being money.

"America has in a comparatively short period received one million Jews from other countries. Representative Morgenthau is helping the members of his race in Palestine in working out the policy of the United States Government.

"All the interest manifested at present by the prominent Jewish American financiers is largely selfish. Not only so in the United States, but in all of Western Europe as well. A sudden extensive emigration of Polish and Russian Jews would seriously disturb the economical structure in those countries. And Jews and Gentiles are concerned over the possible catastrophe of emigration of large numbers of Jews from Poland and Russia. In Jewish circles they are earnestly preparing to organize the emigration. This has been the desire of a few for some years, but now that the danger of losing their own well-established positions comes home to them, it is becoming the desire of the majority of influential Jews, and union on that point is in sight. Regulating emigration will probably include diversion of the already overpopulation of Jews in New York City.

"The Zionists in the Netherlands are at work with might and main to bring together a Palestine fund—a drop in the bucket; but American Jews also are working along this line and the hope is entertained that the non-nationalists among the Jews will join in, understanding the necessity and urgency of the case."

* * *

"God's ways are equal: storm or calm,
Seasons of peril and of rest,
The hurtling dart, the healing balm,
Are all appointed as is best.
In judgments oft misunderstood,
In ways mysterious and obscure,
He brings from evil, lasting good,
And makes the final gladness sure.
While justice takes its course with strength,
Love bids our faith and hope increase:
He'll give the chastened world at length
His afterward of peace."

WHY THE WORLD HAS NOT RECEIVED RESTITUTION

According to the Bible presentation our Lord died for the sins of the whole world when he gave his life as an offset for Father Adam's life, which had been forfeited because of sin. The death of our Savior will be sufficient for the whole world, because the whole world are sharers in Adam's penalty by heredity. The merit of Christ's death, sufficient for the sins of Adam and for the sins of the whole world, has not yet been applied, or paid over, either for Adam or for the world. It has merely been put into the Father's hands, without application for anybody.

The Scriptures show us for what purpose the application is to be made; namely, that after our Lord's second coming and the setting up of his kingdom he will apply, for the full satisfaction and requirements of divine justice, the entire merit of his sacrifice on behalf of Adam and his race. The full penalty of original sin will thus be paid, the race of Adam will be released from that condemnation, and forthwith the work of restitution will proceed. Meantime, while waiting for the application of the blood to the world, the Father imputes that merit of Christ on behalf of the church.

CHRIST'S MERIT IMPUTED TO THE CHURCH

In thinking of this subject, this word impute should be considered. To impute is not to give. To give Christ's merit would mean to make it applicable to Adam and all the race. Jesus is not ready yet to give it to Adam and all the race; for to release Adam and his race just now from the present conditions would not be the best plan.

In commercial usage the word imputation has a similar thought of endorsement. If a man endorses a note for a thousand dollars, he does not give even one penny, but he imputes the value of the money. This transaction illustrates the work of imputing merit to the church. The church is not qualified to enter into a sacrifice with God. God is unwilling to receive as a sacrifice anything that is imperfect. But Jesus, having a credit in the hands of God, imputes a share of that merit to those who present themselves in consecration. On the strength of that merit, he becomes a surety, or guarantor, to those who wish to become his disciples. No more than this would be necessary; for their consecration is to sacrifice, and they need merely to sacrifice what they have. Since our Lord imputes of his merit to the church, which offsets what they have not, whatever they are lacking by reason of heredity, when they shall have finished their contract this merit will be released, just as when the note is paid, the endorser is free.

THE RELEASE OF THAT MERIT

Our Lord Jesus becomes the Guarantor, or Endorser, or Imputor, of his merit to all who make a consecration to God. This includes not only the little flock, but also the great company, who will be partly faithful and who will need this imputation to complete their covenant; it also includes those who later become wilfully unfaithful and will go into the second death. When all these things shall have been accomplished, then this merit of Christ, having been fully released from all this imputation, will be applied in full measure to the sealing of the new covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator. Then his kingdom will be the Mediatorial government for the blessing and uplift of the world.

The proposition made to the followers of Christ is that they will lay down their human lives sacrificially, just as Jesus did his—in whatever way God's providence may mark out for them. But those who present themselves to God in consecration are members of the sinner race of Adam. God properly declines to deal with these repentant sinners thus. He says, Your lives are already under condemnation; already they are three-fourths gone; in any event, you could not present more than one-fourth of the sacrifice that is absolutely required. However, God's plan has provided that Jesus can become surety for those who desire to become his footstep followers in sacrifice. On his account their sacrifices are accepted as a part of his sacrifice, that they may also share in his glory.

PHILOSOPHY OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

The philosophy of the matter is this: Jesus already has in the Heavenly Father's hands—that is in the hands of justice—a meritorious credit to the value of his human life, which he laid down sacrificially in obedience to the divine wish. That sacrifice, sufficient for Adam and every member of his family, is waiting in God's hands to be applied in due time—at the time appointed for the beginning of Christ's Millennial reign for the blessing, uplifting, restitution, of the world. A certain portion of that blessing or merit of Christ is due to come to each member of Adam's race in restitution. A certain portion, therefore, would in due time apply to those of Adam's children who, having now forsaken sin, become members of Christ by consecrating to death.

As the Advocate for those who desire to become his followers, Jesus appropriates, or imputes, to them merit which is to his credit in God's account. That imputation is equivalent to the restitution blessing which otherwise they would have received during the Millennium. This imputed merit, equal to all their imperfection, is, therefore, said to justify these from all sin, from all condemnation. Thus justified by faith these are accepted by God, and their sacrifices accepted of him as part and parcel of their Redeemer's sacrifice.

Not until all the merit of Christ thus imputed to the various persons who have made consecration during this Gospel age shall have been released will the full merit of Christ's sacrifice be available for actual restitution for Adam and all of his race. The portion of merit imputed to each individual follower of Christ is released when that follower dies, because the imputation was merely to permit the sacrifice of the offerer to be acceptable to God. The offerer first gave up his earthly hopes and prospects—the restitution privileges secured by Jesus for all men. That much he sacrificed instantly at the moment of his consecration, and so disposed of it. His consecration, however, includes all that remains of his talents and powers, vitality and strength, even unto death. Our Redeemer's endorsement for the church acts as an embargo on the ransom-price which must be paid to justice as a whole to secure for man restitution privileges.

IMPUTATION OF MERIT ILLUSTRATED

To make an illustration: Suppose that A had deposited a million dollars in the bank, intending it for a specific purpose at a stated time. Meantime some of his friends are needing money or credit. A says to the banker, I do not wish to disturb the million dollars which I have on deposit; but on the strength of its being in your possession, you will be very pleased, I am sure, to extend credit to some of my friends if I endorse their notes. The banker of course would say, Yes. The endorsed notes would be discounted, and A would be liable to the full amount of these notes if they were not paid at maturity. There would, therefore, be an embargo upon his million dollars' credit, to the extent those notes were not paid. But when all the notes were paid, the million dollars would be as free from obligation as if those notes had not been made and A's credit had not been imputed to anybody.

So it is with us who become Christ's disciples. Jesus endorses our notes. He becomes our surety that we will fulfil our engagement, that we will lay down our lives. Until our lives are laid down, this imputation constitutes an embargo on Christ's merit which is in reservation to be applied on behalf of the world. But just as each one of us dies, all imputation of merit in behalf of that one is at an end, because his contract is fulfilled. In the case of those who do not lay down their lives willingly as per covenant, Jesus, as the endorser, will, nevertheless, see to it that they lay down their lives; some of them in the great time of trouble will come through great tribulation, and their death will bring them also some measure of blessing; others will die the second death.

THE FAITH THAT OVERCOMES

When peace, sweet peace, enfolded me,
When darkness turned to light,
When, by faith's miracle, I stood
All blameless in his sight,
What more, O soul of mine, couldst ask;
Is not the wonder done?
Lord, justifying faith is much—
Grant faith to overcome!

Then as I passed beyond "the door,"
And paused beside "the bread,"
And by the light of "candlestick"
My Father's counsel read;
Then crossed in "wedding robe" and stood
Where love's pure incense burns,
Here still, my heart in need, cried out
For faith that overcomes.

And when the brighter light did shine
And God's "own servant" led
With kindly hand, and seated me
At "feast of fat things" spread,
What more, O heart insatiate?
Dost longing still return?
Yes; wisdom from on high is good,
But faith must overcome.

And when the fiery darts fell thick
And trembling heart and hand
Could scarcely bind the sacrifice
With love's unyielding band;
While mental anguish scarce could bear
The fire that needs must burn,
With streaming eyes I plead for faith,
For faith to overcome.

And when in "pastures green," I lay
Me down by "waters still,"
To read and pray and gather strength
For coming good or ill,
Yet still a note of warning rang—
The journey ne'er is done;
Improve the time, build up thy faith,
The faith to overcome.

Ah! ever thus it must be so;
The bride's Gethsemane;
The Bridegroom trod this way before;
Wouldst thou more favored be?
Nay, Father, nay! Thy will be done,
His course my feet would run;
But Father, dear, I pray thee, hear;
Give faith to overcome.

So on I go, through weal and woe,
His faithful child to be,
To tell the story, ever new,
To poor humanity.
With one hand wide I'll scatter truth
From morn till set of sun,
And keep the other lifted high
For faith, to overcome.

And O, some day I'll enter in,
His beauteous face I'll see;
Somewhere within the Father's house
He has a place for me.
And, as I bow low at his feet
And hear his sweet "Well done!"
I'll say, Dear Lord, for every step
Thou gav'st faith to o'ercome.

MARY SANGSTON.

VICTORIES OVER MODERN GIANTS

APRIL 25.—1 SAMUEL 17:1-54.

GIANTS OF OLD—DAVID AND GOLIATH—NOT BY HUMAN MIGHT, BUT BY GOD'S SPIRIT OR POWER—FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT—NOT WITH CARNAL WEAPONS—POWER OF THE PEBBLE OF TRUTH.

The first giants mentioned in the Bible were those who had human mothers, but whose fathers were materialized fallen angels, as recorded in Genesis 6.* These, however, all perished in the Deluge of Noah's day. From time to time since then, there have been human giants found in Asia. Og, king of Bashan, had an iron bedstead thirteen feet long. In their report on Canaan, the spies told of seeing giants there—the sons of Anak. Goliath, the giant of Gath, whom David slew, was probably a descendant of this family.

We have had giants in recent times, also; Byrne, an Irishman, eight feet four inches; Middleton, an Englishman, nine feet three inches; Lushkin, the Russian, eight feet five inches; Chang, the Chinese, seven feet eight inches. Pliny declared that Gabbaras was nine feet nine inches tall. There is, therefore, no room for discrediting the story of David and Goliath.

David, a youth of probably twenty years, visited the army of Israel, in which three of his brothers were soldiers, taking food and delicacies for their refreshment. To his amazement he found the army of Israel facing the army of the Philistines, who had invaded from the west. They were not fighting, each apparently fearing the other. A champion from the Philistines came forth every morning, a giant in size and strength, wearing a bronze armor weighing two hundred and twenty pounds, and brandishing his spear, the head of which weighed twenty-five pounds, and the shaft of which was nearly three inches thick. He defied the Israelites, declaring that a battle between individuals would settle the war. He defied not only the nation of Israel, but its God.

Young David was amazed that this had progressed so long, and that nobody accepted the challenge. A believer in the true God, he realized the Covenant between God and his nation. His faith in the Almighty was such that he accepted the divine promises implicitly. He wondered at the lack of faith manifested by his brothers and his countrymen. He intimated that, backed by God's promise, he himself dared to meet that Goliath.

King Saul of Israel had let it be known that great honor would come to the one who would meet the challenge of the foe. Young David was brought before him; but, anxious as he was for a champion, the king realized that the sinewy youth before him would be no match for the giant strength of Goliath, one blow from whose spear would destroy him. Then the stripling pleaded his cause. He declared that, as keeper of his father's sheep, he had time and again delivered them from the mouth and the paw of the lion and the bear. He had the courage, and above all he had the faith in God. As God had blessed him in his daily duties of the past, he would give him strength for victory in the duty of the hour, the meeting of the defiance of the giant and his insult to Jehovah.

The king was impressed. He would lend David his armor—the best in Israel. But after trying it, young David declined it with thanks. He was not accustomed to such armor and could be himself better without it. He took with him merely his shepherd's staff, to which he was accustomed, and his sling. Passing over toward the side of the Philistines for the combat, he chose five smooth pebbles from the brook. This slight armament, with God's blessing was more than sufficient; for he needed to use only one of the pebbles.

The giant was indignant, saying, "Am I a dog, that this boy should come out to meet me with a stick?" According to tradition, as the lad approached the giant laughed, throwing his head backward. His helmet fell off; and he was exposed to the sure marksmanship of his despised opponent. There were no newspapers in those days, nor public libraries; and he knew not of how mighty a place sling-stones occupied in warfare even then, and that often, in skilled hands, they were almost as effective as are the rifles of today. The giant stunned, his armorbearer fled, and young David quickly dispatched him and took his armor as a trophy. The Philistines surprised, dismayed, fled, Israel pursuing them to their own fortified city.

HOW TO MEET MODERN GIANTS

Following Jesus' death, a new divine order of things was ushered in. Those who have faith in God still have battles to be won, but not with carnal weapons. Their victories, nevertheless, are based upon the same principle which operated favorably with David. Faith in God is lying at the basis—the realization that the cause in which they fight is one approved of God. A courage proper to their faith—a faith gradually developed in previous victories over lesser foes, as in David's case—helps to give courage and strength for battling with the most terrifying giants we may encounter.

Remembering this, each Christian should be daily on the alert to overcome the little weaknesses, the little frailties—to become conquerors in the little battles with selfishness, anger, malice, envy, evil-speaking. Victories over these, and experiences gained with God's help in overcoming these, give preparation step by step for the greatest trials and the grandest victories.

When we learn of the divine promise, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne," it gives us the thought that a great victory must be won to prove ourselves worthy of the great honor to which God has called his church. And this victory, as we are happy to learn, is not always to the strong, but to those whom God will bless. And the conflict which God approves and will reward is not strife with friends or neighbors, however unreasonable they may be, but strife against unrighteousness, against sin, against everything which the divine law opposes. This strife and victory belong, first of all, in our own hearts and minds and, secondarily, will extend, as the Lord's providence may indicate, in battling against public evils and in support of public and civic righteousness.

We are not, however, to forget that the great giant of sin and iniquity, which has dared the people of God for centuries, will be smitten down only at God's appointed time, and by the antitype of David. The name David signifies Beloved. The antitypical Beloved is The Christ—Jesus the Head, the church his body. Shortly, a sling-stone of truth is to smite down the great opponent; and the antitypical David will begin the Millennial reign which is to lift up the world and bless it. As members of this David class, we must have the overcoming spirit, and its supporting faith and trust in God's promise and power.

THE FAITH OF ONE PERSECUTED

MAY 2.—1 SAMUEL 19.

SAUL'S JEALOUSY OF DAVID—ATTEMPTS TO INJURE HIM—FREQUENT DELIVERANCES SUPERHUMAN—SATAN OUR GREAT ENEMY SEEKS OUR INJURY—DEVOTION TO GOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS SECURES US DELIVERANCE—WHY SUCH EXPERIENCES ARE PERMITTED—THE ARMY AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL PRAISED AND IDOLIZED THE YOUTHFUL DAVID.

"Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."—Proverbs 29:25.

Wars with the Philistines continuing, David was made a regular soldier, with a command over a regiment and closely in touch with King Saul himself. Victory after victory came wherever David was engaged, and King Saul saw the admiration of the people turned from himself to David. The sentiment reached a climax when, returning from one of his victories, the women and girls of a village came forth singing:

"Saul hath slain his thousands,
But David his tens of thousands!"

The flame of jealousy took full possession of the king, and thenceforth his one purpose seems to have been to destroy David. It was a secret withheld from him that David was already anointed by Samuel to be his successor. He merely knew that Samuel the Prophet had told him that, as a consequence of his failure to carry out the divine instructions regarding the Amalekites, the kingdom would be taken from him and his family and given to another. He possibly hoped that this might never come true—that his son Jonathan might be his successor.

Jealousy is the bitter fruit of selfishness gone to seed. It unbalances reason, extinguishes happiness. It subjects its possessor to horrible melancholy, so that when it is in control he is really crazy. Not only is this illustrated in King Saul's case, but it is more or less illustrated in the experiences of every human being. Who does not by experience know what jealousy is? and the more he knows of it the worse. It has made murderers of children, as well as of grown-ups. It has wrecked homes, as well as business enterprises. It is the most

* For further explanation send 6c in stamps for booklet, "Spiritism—Proofs that it is Demonism." Address, WATCH TOWER, Brooklyn, N. Y.

terrible, and at the same time the most foolish, manifestation of selfishness. Every one recognizing it ir himself should be alarmed—should throttle it promptly, seeking victory through vigilance, and if a Christian, through prayer.

SAUL'S JEALOUSY WAS CRAFTY

When under control of these fits of jealousy, King Saul is described as having had an evil spirit from the Lord, but more properly, we shall say, an evil spirit opposite from the Lord's—the reverse of the Lord's Spirit of kindness, justice, love. When the king was laboring under these fits of melancholy which followed the cessation of the Philistine wars, young David could sometimes soothe him by skillful playing on a harp; yet he knew the king's treacherous mood and, keen eyed, on two occasions caught the king with his eye in time to hinder Saul from throwing at him a javelin-scepter which he usually carried.

Intent upon drawing David into a quarrel which might be construed as traitorous and justifying his death, the king promised him his elder daughter to wife, and then gave her to another. David, nowever, was discreet, and merely commented that he was not of a sufficiently noble family to expect such honors; neither was he able financially to give a sufficient dowry for a king's daughter. Another trap was to betroth to him the king's younger daughter, Michal. Young David again told of his unworthiness of the daughter and his lack of wealth for dowry, whereupon Saul stipulated that the dowry should be the evidence of the killing of a hundred Philistines. No doubt he hoped confidently that in the attempt to meet this requirement David would lose his own life; but instead, young David killed twice the number and received Michal, Saul's daughter.

The king, getting more insanely jealous, told his son Jonathan and his courtiers in general that David must be destroyed. The sentiment of Jonathan was as loving and brotherly as his father's was cruel, jealous, selfish. It was Jonathan who would lose by David's attainment of the honor of the kingdom. Hence the love of Jonathan has become a proverb. Additionally, he had the true spirit of manhood and brotherhood, the spirit of a peacemaker. He interceded with his father for David. His language is a beautiful model of filial respect as well as of devotion to his friend David. He said, "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to theeward very good: For he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel; thou sawest it, and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood to slay David without a cause?"—Verses 4, 5.

The plea of the peacemaker was successful. The king relented. David was brought back and became again a member of the household. But it was only for a time. The king was not without some noble sentiments, but they were not deep enough. They did not control his life. On the contrary he was under the control of the evil mind, the selfish mind, the jealous mind, which is far from, and opposite to, the mind, the Spirit, of God.

Ere long, in a jealous fit again, the king not only made the motion to throw the javelin, but threw it with deadly aim and smote into the wall just behind where David sat; for David was quick and dodged it. David went to his room; but a guard had been stationed there, instructed that upon his coming forth he was to be killed. His wife informed him and assisted him to safety by letting him down out of a window. Possibly the house was built upon the wall, as in the case of St. Paul's similar deliverance.

TWO HUNDRED MURDERS FOR A WIFE

Scoffers seize upon one feature of this lesson to condemn the Bible as encouraging murder and with being, therefore, in conflict with righteousness and in conflict with a God of righteousness. They say, "Here we find David, a Prophet, described as being very discreet and as having the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of a sound mind; and yet we see him taking the lives of two hundred human beings as the price of a wife, and not a word in the Scriptures in condemnation."

Such charges and arguments should be met in a reasonable way—they should not be passed over with the remark, "No use reasoning with you; you are an infidel." He that doeth righteousness is righteous; he that doeth unrighteousness is unrighteous. This Bible proposition applied to God and to David, as well as to others. But, when inquiring respecting it, we should approach our subject with unprejudiced minds. Instead of condemning from the standpoint of prejudice, we should rather inquire how this course can be made to square with the principles of justice, which the Bible everywhere maintains.

In the first place, we must have in mind the difference between being a Jew under the Law Covenant and being a Christian under the headship of Christ. Second, we should remember that the Bible does not teach that those who die still live and pass immediately into everlasting torture. It teaches that the dead are really dead, and that the hope which God holds out for them is a resurrection from the death state in the future under more favorable conditions, under the blessed influences of Messiah's kingdom. The Bible informs us that the penalty of sin is death—not torment after death. It informs us that this penalty was justly inflicted upon Father Adam because of his intelligent and wilful sin. It tells us that the human family are dying because, by laws of heredity, the seeds of sickness, imperfection, death, are in us, from the hour of our birth.

From this viewpoint, our entire world is a world of convicts under death-sentence. This accounts to us for the different treatment which God accords to humanity from that which he gives to angels—joy, peace, life, perfection. This accounts to us for God's permitting various death-dealing circumstances to have control—famine, pestilence, earthquakes, cyclones etc. When we come to see that the same God who justly condemned all through one man's disobedience has made a provision for the justification of all through the obedience of Christ unto death, then we see things in a new light. When we learn that Messiah's kingdom is to be set up for the very purpose of bringing light, knowledge of God and full opportunity of return to his favor and everlasting life, our hearts rejoice.

Coming back to our first proposition, we realize that we are not to judge David and people of his time as we would judge ourselves of this Gospel age. He must be judged by the law, under which he and his nation were placed at Mount Sinai—"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life." The Israelites were informed that the people of the Land of Canaan had allowed their cup of iniquity to come to the full (1 Samuel 15:2, 3); and that the children of Abraham were given that entire land, with the divine approval of their taking possession of it as quickly as possible. They were fully commissioned to slay all their enemies there as being enemies of the Lord, not even being told that the Lord had a future provision for them all in Messiah's kingdom.

The Philistines were in the Land of Canaan, where they not only held their own portion, but had invaded the portion which Israel had already conquered. They had caused loss of many lives in Israel. It was in full accord with the divine instruction to the Israelites that the Philistines and all other occupants of Canaan should be utterly destroyed. David, therefore, was merely carrying out what all Israelites recognized as being the divine instruction respecting the divine program. From this viewpoint alone can the Lord's instructions and the conduct of the Israelites in the past be recognized as proper.

Under the new dispensation which began with our Lord's redemptive work and the Pentecostal blessing, the Lord's people of this age, the church, are under new orders, and by word and by example they are to illustrate the principles of mercy as in previous times the Jews were commanded to illustrate the principles of Divine Justice. We are to love our enemies, to do good unto them that hate us and that persecute us and say all manner of evil against us falsely. Thus we shall be the children of our Father who is in heaven, and manifest that we have been begotten of him by his holy Spirit. But the Jews were not children of God. They were a "house of servants." (Hebrews 3:5) They never thought of speaking of themselves as sons of God. When Jesus declared himself to be the Son of God they were indignant, said that he blasphemed, and took up stones to stone him.

The first human son of God was Adam, and when he sinned, he was cut off from that relationship to God; and none others from Adam's time down to Jesus' time were ever recognized or spoken of in the Bible as sons of God. They were sinners, strangers, aliens, foreigners, convicts, under death sentence. But with Jesus came not only the new teaching but the new relationship. "Moses verily was faithful as a servant over all his House; but Christ as a Son over his own house [of sons]; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Hebrews 3:5, 6.

A FRIEND IN NEED—A FRIEND INDEED

MAY 9.—1 SAMUEL 20.

JONATHAN'S LOVE FOR DAVID—A MODEL OF FRIENDSHIP—ITS TEST—ITS ENDURANCE—ITS BASIS—FRIENDSHIP BEING LOST—SELFISHNESS AN IMPENDING DANGER—"EVERY MAN'S HAND AGAINST HIS NEIGHBOR"—THE HEAVENLY MODEL.

"A friend loveth at all times."—Proverbs 17:17.

History records noble examples of friendship; but supreme amongst these is the story of our lesson—the friendship, the love, of Jonathan, son of Saul and prospective heir of the throne of Israel, for David, his rival in the hearts of the people and in the divine program. The purity and unselfishness of his friendship demonstrates to us a nobility possessed by some in those days, which we might not have suspected and which is quite in conflict with the Evolution theory.

The loving spirit of Jonathan stands out all the more in contrast with the jealous spirit of his father, King Saul. Apparently his first meeting with David was after the latter's victory over Goliath. Instead of thinking of David as a rival, who should be crushed, the noble Jonathan took off his own princely robe and gave it to him, together with his sword and his famous bow.

Rev. Alex. Whyte remarks, "Jonathan was the eldest son of Saul; and he was thus the heir-apparent to the throne of Israel. Handsome and high-mettled, full of nerve and full of heart, Jonathan was the pride of the army and the darling of the common people. His comrades, for his beauty of person and swiftness of foot, were wont to call him The Gazelle. But for his father's great and disastrous transgression, Jonathan might soon have been the second king of Israel, second in succession to Saul, but second to no king that ever sat on a throne in those great qualities of mind, heart and character that give stability to a throne and add lustre to a crown."

Well was it written by one of the ancients, "Life hath no blessing like an earnest friend"; and a poet has written:

"Life offers no joy like a friend;
Fulfilment and prophecy blend
In the throb of a heart with our own—
A heart where we know and are known."

"A FRIEND IN NEED, A FRIEND INDEED"

Jonathan's friendship, love, was not of the effervescent kind. It was the genuine article. He did not love merely in word, but in deed and in truth—not merely when his father favored his friend and when the public acclaimed him and when he would thus have favor with others; but he loved him just the same when the king became the enemy of his friend and sought his life. Indeed, it may be said that no friendship could be surely counted upon until after it has been tried. The friendship which will not endure trial, testing, the friendship which will make no sacrifices is not the kind to be modeled after.

Jonathan had love of the kind the Lord admonishes his followers to have—the love which in honor prefers one another. While other loves have been great, this one doubtless stands preëminent above earthly love, especially because it was founded on a religious basis. It was because David loved the Lord, and sought to be guided by his will as that will was manifest at that time, that he would wait—that he conducted himself with wisdom, as the record declares. And it was because Jonathan discerned this spirit of wisdom, because he realized David was guided by the spirit of righteousness, that he loved David.

Indeed, we may be sure that in proportion as we understand the Bible and receive the spirit of the truth, in that same proportion we shall be able to appreciate and to copy and to exemplify the best there is of principle—whether of friendship, or of duty to a monarch, of duty to our family relationship, or of duty toward our God. There are many influences operating toward a spirit of selfishness, avarice, jealousy, while the influences making for true friendship, true love, all the best qualities of heart and head, are from the Lord.

We have already noted in a previous lesson how Jonathan acted as peacemaker between his father the king, and David. Today's lesson brings to our attention another occasion on which Jonathan acted the part of a true friend. David realized that his life was in danger and mentioned his fears to Jonathan. The latter was at a loss to believe that his father would break his word, yet was impressed by David's attitude. The feast of the new moon was at hand; and David was expected to sit at the royal table, King Saul at the head, Prince Jonathan at the right hand, the captain of the host at the left, and David occupying the fourth place, opposite the king. In harmony with an arrangement made between the friends, Jonathan was to ascertain his father's intentions definitely and to communicate these to David.

On the first day of the feast the king said nothing, although Jonathan, to attract attention to the matter and thus to draw out his father, chose a convenient time for taking David's seat. Finally the king asked for the "son of Jesse," as though he hated the very name "David." Jonathan replied that David had gone to keep the feast at Bethlehem by his permission.

The king had apparently been foiled in his intention to kill David at this time and vented his wrath upon his son, whom really he greatly loved. He addressed him as an unruly son, unworthy of his mother, thus implying that he ignored him as his own son. In his anger he threw a javelin at his son, probably not with the intention of striking him, but merely of venting his ferocious jealousy. Jonathan's speech in return shows that he was thinking less of what he himself was risking for his friend and more in respect to the injustice being done that friend. "So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month; for he was grieved for David, because Saul had done him shame."

It is a beautiful friendship which in stress forgets self and thinks only of the interests of the friend. As though in contrast with all the human loves and friendships, we read of Jesus, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Nevertheless, in the case of Jesus, it meant more than any earthly love or friendship; for "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The Apostle declares that the Lord thus set an example to all Christians, that they should "lay down their lives for the brethren," be ready to die the one for the other. This is the heavenly love, the divine friendship, of which the love of Jonathan may be taken as a sample, next to the example of our Lord and the Apostles.

"IS IT NOT BEYOND THEE?"

The next morning David, having returned from his home, was to get Jonathan's judgment respecting the king's sentiments. The agreed-upon signal was that Jonathan with his bow and arrows should go into the field near to a great rock; and in connection with his archery would call out, "Is it not beyond thee? Make haste!" if the message was that David should flee. And so it was done. But the two friends could not think of parting, perhaps forever, without having personal contact. Jonathan went over to the rock behind which David hid. The two embraced, after the manner of the East, kissing each other Goodbye—true lovers, with a manly, noble love.

Here it was that Jonathan indicated his faith in God's providence in respect to David, and asked him to make a covenant with him that whatever should occur he would deal graciously with him and his family, saying, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed, forever. And he arose and departed; and Jonathan returned to the city."

Bible history shows us that David never forgot the obligation he thus undertook to be a friend to the family of Saul. The custom of the East at that time was that a new dynasty coming into power should utterly destroy all the males of the dynasty which was being overturned. But this was not so in David's case.

It was on the occasion of Jonathan's death with his father on the field of battle shortly after, in conflict with the Philistines, that David expressed the beautiful words:

"O Jonathan, on thy high places thou wast slain!
I am distressed for thee, my Jonathan, my brother!
Pleasant hast thou been to me exceedingly!
Wonderful was thy love to me, passing the love of women!"

We trust that none can read this story without being influenced favorably toward friendship, to be a truer, a nobler, a more faithful friend than otherwise; but especially should Christians get a blessing from this story of Jonathan's love, leading on as it does to the love of Christ and to the injunction that they should be copies of God's dear Son; and that their friendship should be loyal, true, enduring, especially one for the other, as the Apostle exhorts, "Doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith."

COLPORTEUR SUCCESS IN GOOD TERRITORY

The European war and the peculiar financial conditions resulting everywhere are very favorable to our colporteurs. They find the ears of the public much more often than ever before for the explanations of the present "distress of nations with perplexities," and the outcome, which the Bible alone tells. The Lord is blessing the colporteur work wonderfully, as he has done from the beginning. The interested can now be sold the entire set of six volumes with a year's subscription to THE WATCH TOWER, for $2.65 almost as easily as previously one volume could be sold—provided the purchaser has money; otherwise he may be able to purchase only one volume. The success of the colporteurs in introducing the six volumes with THE WATCH TOWER has done much to increase our WATCH TOWER subscription list. Every arrival of THE WATCH TOWER is a fresh reminder in respect to the books, which are valueless unless read.

Colporteur territory has divided itself up into three divisions. It is poor where business is closed down or where crops have been a failure during the past year. Colporteurs should not attempt to continue in such territory, but should inquire for something better. Medium territory would be that in which the colporteur, with energy and perseverance, can make ends meet. Any having this territory should use it and not attempt to find the best, as thereby he might make a mistake. "Be content with such things as ye have," where they are at all endurable. Good territory is very scarce. It includes the rice and sugar countries adjacent to New Orleans, Louisiana and Mississippi. It includes also territory contiguous to establishments manufacturing fire-arms, also the districts where wheat and corn crops were good last year. This includes portions of Kansas, Nebraska, Northern Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, etc. While colporteurs in medium territories are advised to stay where they are, those in bad territories, not able to make expenses, are advised to seek new fields. Address the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY—Colporteur Department.

SEEDTIME AND HARVEST OF CHARACTER

"Be not deceived, . . . he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Galatians 6:7, 8.

The Apostle here brings to our attention the fact that there is danger of some of the Lord's people being deceived. Some might think that they could live according to their earthly desires, fleshly desires, and then attend meeting, or observe other religious forms and it would make them all right with God. Others might deceive themselves into thinking that they might live according to the flesh, and then by going to the Lord in prayer they might have the matter all forgiven and corrected, and still be as far along spiritually as those who live daily a life of faithfulness to God. Another error which has deceived many is the teaching that, after living according to the inclinations of the flesh in sinful ways, they can go to the priest and obtain absolution, and that this will make them all right again.

Now these are deceptions. God has established a general principle which applies both to the Church and to the world. This general principle operates along the lines of sowing and reaping. Suppose a man unfamiliar with the nature of certain seeds should sow seed of thistles or of tares. A little later he might visit his field and say, "This seed seems to have been all right. I see nothing wrong. It has not hurt the ground in any respect; the field looks as well as if I had sown timothy seed or clover seed. The plants are green and thrifty, and indeed make quite a fine appearance." But later in the season the nature of the crop would make very manifest the dire mistake in the choice of the seed sown.

In the natural world men are sure to reap in kind as they have sown. They would not expect to sow tare seed and reap a crop of wheat. The law of cause and effect is no less inexorable in the spiritual realm. And so the Apostle says that "God is not mocked"—do not think that you can do an evil thing and get good results. Whoever "sows to the wind shall reap the whirlwind;" whoever sows to the flesh will reap accordingly; whoever sows to the Spirit will reap in kind.

THOUGHT THE BEGINNING OF CHARACTER

What is meant, then, by this word "sowing" when referring to spiritual things? Apparently it means a course of life, or conduct, that would bring good results or a course that would bring evil results. We sometimes hear the expression, "That young man is sowing his wild oats." The thought is that the conduct of such a one is evil; and that the conduct of the individual will react upon his character. We might go further and say that all conduct must be incited by previous thought. In other words, our thoughts are the initiative in what we are! To illustrate: When God would create the world he first had a plan respecting it. All that he has been doing since has been the following out of a plan that he originally had. We might say that it was the good thoughts of God which led to the good results.

So it has been in the case of Satan. Satan's course in the world has been that of sowing evil things, sowing tares. His course has been fatal to himself and injurious to others, and it was the result of the wrong thought he had before he committed the sin. He had said in his heart, "I will ascend into Heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; . . . I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:13, 14) He had a covetous spirit, a selfish, presumptuous spirit, a spirit in opposition to God.

These two spirits are still operative in the world—God's Spirit and the spirit of the adversary. In referring to things pertaining to humanity, the Apostle speaks of this adversary spirit as being the spirit of the flesh—not that it is the spirit of the flesh in its original perfection, but the spirit of the fallen flesh. It is the spirit of Satan, which has become dominant in the human family. The Apostle addresses the words of our text particularly to the church, but with a good application to the world also. If any of the Lord's people who have been enlightened and made partakers of the holy Spirit should live according to the flesh chiefly, they would surely not receive the prize of the high calling. If they wish to attain glory, honor and immortality, they must live according to the Spirit of God, the spirit of God's law, the spirit of righteousness. They must conform their lives to the life of Christ their Exemplar, or they can never hope to attain the things promised them.

Because of the imperfection of the flesh inherited through Father Adam, the Lord's children can never in this life attain the perfection that they would wish. There will be blemishes and weaknesses of brain, of thought, and of the entire body. But they should live as nearly up to the standard as possible, and the Lord will compensate for their unintentional weaknesses. His grace will be sufficient for them to enable them to overcome. But if they sow to the flesh they will reap in the flesh—they will reap the evil. However if they are still loyal to the Lord, and repent of their derelictions, striving to overcome, he will overrule these experiences for their good.

LOYAL HEART THE FIRST REQUISITE

It is therefore for the church to sow according to the Spirit, to conduct themselves according to the Spirit of God, who is a righteous being. In order to do this, we see that the heart must be right. So the getting of our hearts right is the very first thing the Lord sets before us. We cannot even become his children until our hearts are right. We must turn from sin and accept the atonement of the great Sin-Bearer. Then we must heed the words of our Lord, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." In so doing we are sowing to the Spirit. If we continue thus to sow, we shall reap the great reward—all the glorious spiritual things the Lord has promised to his faithful ones of the Gospel age.

But in proportion as we are derelict, as we sow seeds of evil, in that same proportion shall we be sowing to corruption. This does not necessarily mean the second death; but there will be corrections and stripes for the things which are improper. Whoever, therefore, sows a little to the flesh will reap accordingly. If he continues to sow according to the flesh, he will reap a much larger measure of results—greater corruption. And if his life be given over to sin, if he has abandoned the life of the Spirit entirely, the effect will be the second death, which is the extreme penalty of wilful opposition to God.

Hence, sowing to the flesh might or might not mean certainly to reap the second death. It would surely mean to reap difficulty, tendencies away from God, in proportion to the evil sowing. With the spirit-begotten it would lead to the second death if the course is not changed. We see this matter illustrated in many Christian people. They begin the Christian course, and live to a considerable degree to the Spirit of God, yet they occasionally give way to the things of the flesh and more or less encourage the fleshly mind. They do not perhaps realize any immediate results, but there are evil seeds

sown. These evil seeds, evil thoughts in the mind, even if afterwards repented of, may more or less corrupt the mind all the rest of life; they tend away from the Lord, away from the Heavenly things, and make so much more to fight against. The Christian should see to it that all of his course in life, his desires, his thoughts, are brought into accord with the spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of God, the holy Spirit.

Sowing to the Spirit and sowing to the flesh would, we understand, mean either to live according to God's way or, on the other hand, to live according to the spirit of the adversary —to sow seed that will result either in the blessed fruits of the holy Spirit of God or in the fruits of the fallen flesh—the corrupted, Satanized spirit with all its accomplishments. If we live according to our flesh, it will mean corruption, moral and spiritual degeneration; for we are in the corruptible condition.

PRESENT COURSE OF WORLD TO BEAR ON FUTURE

In their present condition the world cannot hope to gain everlasting life; for they have not come into relationship with the Life-Giver, although God has provided, as the church knows, an opportunity for everlasting life to the whole world of mankind. But while the world is not yet on trial for this everlasting life, nevertheless their conduct has a decided bearing on their future. If now they are living according to the lines of selfishness—self-gratification—they will reap correspondingly, according to the influences that are at work in them. And this will leave them in a more and more corrupted condition as they continue so to live, and they will have more to overcome in the next age, if they would ever gain everlasting life. They would be much more advanced and advantaged if they would follow the things of righteousness, if they would cultivate the principles of justice and love; and they will be much more degraded and handicapped if they follow the things of selfishness and impurity.

We mighty carry the matter clear back to Eden. In the case of Father Adam, when he sowed to self-gratification, when he ate of the forbidden fruit, he followed the wrong course; he failed to follow his best judgment, his conscience; he followed inclination. As a result he brought upon himself the death penalty, which gradually led to extinction of life; and all his posterity have shared his condemnation. Sad was the sowing, and most bitter and far-reaching has been the reaping. But through the mercy of God even man's terrible experiences with sin will prove a very valuable object lesson to angels and to all of God's intelligent creatures throughout eternity.

"CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE"

"No man can serve two masters. . . . Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."—Matthew 6:24.

The thought which our Lord apparently wished to impress upon his disciples was that there is a principle involved in service—that no one can possibly render full service to two opposing interests, two opposing masters; for the one would surely be neglected in the interest of the other. There would be more or less of a preference shown. After making a general observation regarding the impossibility of serving two masters, the Lord applied this principle, saying, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon"—God and selfishness, righteousness and unrighteousness. Man was originally God's servant. It was natural for him to appreciate the divine character and arrangements and to render willing service. But mankind were deceived as they got under the control of the great adversary, being influenced by the powers of evil, the chief effects of which have been ignorance, superstition and selfishness.

One of the deplorable conditions of the present time is that from birth selfishness is almost forced upon one. Man learns to give his time, his influence, for selfish purposes and projects. He fails to see that God is the one who should be served at any cost. But men were born and shapen in iniquity. They are servants of sin, slaves of sin. But our Lord Jesus pointed out that through the knowledge of himself and compliance with his terms of discipleship, there came a release from this slavery, an opportunity to pass over to the side of righteousness.

However, an opportunity to take a stand for right came before our Lord's day. As a knowledge of God was granted to any people, they had an opportunity to assert themselves on the side of right. At the time when the Law Covenant was given, God set forth the principles of righteousness in that law. The whole nation of Israel accepted God as their Savior, and entered into a covenant with him that they would be his loyal people. Yet after they had done this, the influences of evil in their flesh became manifest. They sought to be the servants of God and at the same time of self, dividing their interests between God's affairs and the affairs of self.

A WORTHY EXAMPLE SET

Jesus pointed out this particular fact, and told the people of his day that it was impossible to perform this half-hearted service—they could not serve two masters, for nobody would be pleased. If they were to serve Mammon, serve the present order of things, then they could not be pleasing God. If they wished to serve God, serve righteousness, to whatever extent they did this they would be displeasing to the world; they must be servants of either the one or the other; the two services combined would be impossible.

The example of our Lord Jesus when he came to earth, was in harmony with this position; for he fully renounced the world and made absolute consecration of his life to God and his service. Thus he set us an example. All who have the same spirit should walk in his steps. This was in accordance with the Jewish law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength." Any one who kept this law would not be serving self; for his service would be all for God.

Those who are following in the Master's footsteps are all for God, or, as we sometimes sing, "All for Jesus." As we follow the example of Jesus, and walk as he walked, we are rendering whole-hearted service to God. The result of serving this Master will be a great reward. "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name above every name." And the church has been invited to follow him. So we should serve God in everything, with all our heart, mind, soul, strength. This is our commission. This we are to do to the point of sacrificing all earthly interests and of laying down our lives for the brethren. This course, followed faithfully to the end, will bring us to the same reward that Jesus received—glory, honor, immortality.

RENDERING UNTO CAESAR HIS OWN

It may be asked how this text comports with the Apostle's suggestion that one who was bound when he received the truth should not seek to be free. (1 Corinthians 7:20-22) These words of St. Paul express the thought that when the truth finds us it does not necessarily change our earthly relationships; that if a man were a slave, for instance, and the truth of God reached him, he should not rebel against his earthly master. He is not to think of this new relationship to God as changing the color of his skin or his earthly relationship. The Apostle is speaking of the body and not the heart when he says, "Seek not to be loosed." Our bodies may be enslaved for one reason or another. It might be a bondage like that of olden times—captured service. Or it might be that we had become the servants of those who were willing to pay for our services. While we are not to do anything contrary to the divine law or to our consciences, yet we are to serve our earthly masters faithfully. They have purchased our time, or a large measure of it; and we must render to them conscientiously all that is theirs by contract. If one is a servant in a military way, or in any other way, he should be faithful.

This will not interfere with one's service to God; for our Lord has instructed us to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Whoever is faithful in this is doing the will of his Heavenly Master. There would be no conflict, but full harmony. The only conflict would be if the master on earth should wish us to do something contrary to the commands of our Master in heaven. We are to suffer anything rather than do what our Heavenly Lord would not approve, and thus defile our consciences.

Looking into the future, we see that the present master, ruler, of this old order is soon to be bound, that he may deceive the nations no more for a thousand years, and that the new ruler, the new master of the world, is to be The Christ—Jesus and his church. We ask ourselves how this principle will apply then. The answer is that there will be only the one Master to obey. There will be no rendering unto Caesar then. All will be made fully aware that this Master is the only one who has the power, the right to command. The knowledge of God's glory shall fill the whole earth—the knowledge of God's righteousness, the knowledge of God's power, the knowledge of God's wisdom, the knowledge of God's love. Whatever he commands is the right thing, as every one will then learn and fully understand.

THE SCRIPTURALLY "WICKED"

In the Scriptures Satan is represented as the deceiver of mankind. He puts light for darkness and darkness for light. God's proposition through Christ is that during the thousand years of the Millennial reign, the whole world will be brought to the true knowledge of God, an accurate knowledge. Deception will be no longer permitted. The world will see what righteousness really is, what its rewards really are, and how desirable it is. As a consequence, the majority will then, we think, be glad to give heed to the one Master. The exceptions are represented as having the same disposition as Satan; and whoever will have that disposition will be destroyed. When a person comes to know the right and when the right is made reasonable, and possible for him, and he then prefers to do wrong rather than right, let him die the death. This will be the sentence. Such will be counted "the wicked," the incorrigible.

The word "wicked" from the Scriptural standpoint means those who do wrong intentionally. So all the wicked, knowing the wrong to be wrong, and doing it wilfully and purposely, shall die the second death. In due time none shall be left alive except those who serve the one true Master. The difficulty with mankind at present is ignorance, which God has not yet lifted from the world. He has permitted the ignorance and darkness of the present time that the world may learn its lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and be the better prepared for the lessons that are to follow. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them." But these blinded minds shall soon have the obstructions removed that they may see.

Those who have become children of the light, who have accepted the Lord Jesus and become his disciples, and who now see clearly the divine will and plan, have much more responsibility than those who have never seen. We also have greater prospects of blessing—not only the present joy, comfort, peace and knowledge, but additionally the hope of making our "calling and election sure," of attaining to joint-heirship with the Master. God will leave the scattering of the darkness for Christ to do. God has let the world go on its way, meantime providing the Savior, the Deliverer—The Christ—who will soon take control of the whole world. He will cause the light, the truth, to shine out, to flood the earth with knowledge and blessing. Then with the true light shining everywhere, there will be no excuse for anybody who will not walk in it; each one must then choose finally whether or not he will serve the true Master.

INTERESTING LETTERS

THE VOW AN ADDED SAFEGUARD

My Dear Brother Russell:—

In the fulness of time the attention of the dear brethren here was publicly directed to the consideration of the vow as an added safeguard to the new creature and a further aid to the development of the spiritual graces. Here the first result was to cause a division in the camp for the time being, some of the brethren assuming an attitude of determined opposition to it. The great adversary is mightily afraid of that vow. He realizes that it will always be a most effective check upon his machinations, and so he invents a hundred and one reasons why it should be avoided. We had them all: It would "despoil us of our liberties;" it would "hinder our fellowship;" it would "make business intercourse difficult;" and "marriage of the saints impossible." "No; we would not sell our liberties and spoil the loving fellowship we formerly enjoyed." "We would not take the vow, even though it cast us into outer darkness!"

Here, as always, the adversary overreached himself, and reason returning, some were constrained to ask, "Could such a course that seems bound to stampede the Lord's flock be of his leading?" And so one after another was led to reconsider his attitude to the vow; and as this was done the opposition thereto melted away like mists before the sun. A dear brother who was strong in opposition to the vow, was led to see the folly of that course, and was anxious, therefore, to publicly intimate his conversion. This he did in a most noble manner. After explaining his change of front and the reason therefor, he came out and in the presence of the whole class affixed his signature to the enclosed copy. Of course, such action was infectious and to our great joy one after another followed our dear brother's example until now the opposition to the vow has vanished into thin air. Praise the Lord for his great goodness to us!

Now we, twenty-four brothers and sisters of the ecclesia at Durban, wish to thank you for the admirable foresight which caused you some years ago to propound such a wise provision for our safeguarding in these evil days; and we wish to assure you that we have made this vow our own, and are determined by his grace to vow and pay unto the Lord our God. To this end we humbly beseech an interest in your prayers; and in testimony of our determinations we have set our names to the accompanying copy. May God give us all grace to be faithful unto death, that we may gain the crown of life!

With continued Christian love to you, dear Brother, and to all those of like precious faith at the Bethel, I remain,

Your Brother in our imminent Hope,

Wm. W. Johnson.—Natal, S. Africa.

[New readers of The Watch Tower may not fully understand the above letter, not having seen a copy of the Vow. Upon post-card request we will mail a copy of it free.]

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS ENDORSED

Dear Brother Russell:—

In sending in current report I am constrained to bring to your notice a point of some possible moment as respects the arrangements for public meetings at small places.

It appears to me that some of the dear pilgrim brethren have permitted the large audiences at certain places to create an impression that small audiences are hardly worth while. In consequence, whenever there is a small attendance at a publicly advertised meeting, they advise the brother, "If I were you I should not try a public meeting here any more." At a number of recent appointments, friends have told me practically the same thing.

I find that sometimes not a single grain of wheat will result from a large meeting, while at other times several grains will come from a small meeting. Then, in such little places, everyone knows everybody's business, and if a private class meeting is held there will usually be a few strangers. I don't see why it wouldn't be better to make some little public announcement and get twenty-five strangers instead of a few.

In such places a public meeting is practically no trouble or expense. Often there is no good hall in the place, but a schoolhouse to be had free.

If the pilgrim brethren would not discourage the holding of public services, but would rather advise as to wisest way of getting results therefrom, I think it would be better.

Another thing: A class recently visited complained about the way the pilgrims had been "scolding" them. Wouldn't it be an improvement if all scolding was done more indirectly, by example and suggestion, rather than by direct and public criticism.

It has done me great good to perceive the great number who seem to be laying hold on the truth. Everywhere this is so evident. With much Christian love.

Yours in His name, B. H. Barton.

ENTERED UPON HER LAST TEST

My Beloved Pastor:—

I was very much impressed by the statement in the Dec. 15, Watch Tower: "The church has entered upon her last test." In applying this to myself and others, I should be able to notice testings of a more peculiar and stringent character than in the past. And I do. One is the test to be especially recognized and honored of the brethren. The Lord has given me victory. I am reconciled to God's ways. In watching others, I can see the same struggle.

In our Berean Bible class study, with fifteen or twenty attending, we do not always get around to ask each a question, though all have an opportunity to ask questions and comment. This does not meet with the approval of all the sisters. One sister, with some teaching ability, is offended because we do not comment favorably upon her questions and answers. She thinks that the elders are trying to keep the sisters down, that we are not asking her enough questions, and praying due respect to her.

We think it proper not to give too much encouragement where there seems to be plenty, but rather to encourage the quiet and backward ones. We think the sister is in enough danger anyway, as she is taking upon herself to teach two classes of sisters. We shall strive to live and teach so as to have a conscience of offense before God and man.

May the Lord help us all, elders and otherwise, to realize more fully the responsibility resting upon us, and to manifest a more brotherly care for each other, knowing that we all expect to be with the Lord in glory shortly. May God bless you in your service!

Your humble Brother by His grace, ———.

HUNGRY FOR GOD'S LOVE

MY DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

Your sermons in the newspapers are such a comfort, and I am proud to know that there is a man of God who is brave enough to tell the truth as he sees it. We go to church, but where is the comfort to be found there? Money! money! money! The poor man is made to feel his position in life so keenly that it is far better for him to stay at home and go out in the fields or on the water and praise God there, for God wants the heart and a good, pure life.

We are hungry for God and for Christ's love—pure, sweet love. We go to church, but we are made to feel that we poor creatures need to know more of God's love! It is there for us, only our eyes are not yet opened. We have attended the same church for twenty years—Presbyterian, and a little over two years ago I had an awful, awful sorrow (I had but the two sons), when my older son was taken ill. Everything was done that could be done for him, but God called him home. His was one of the most beautiful characters. When he was ill and suffering, there was never a murmur. He was on the Produce Exchange, and his employer wrote him a most beautiful letter, stating that they had stood side by side for thirteen years and he had never seen a frown.

After the funeral, and our bills were being settled, we were horrified when the undertaker said to my husband that the minister expected his pay—from five to ten dollars. What a dreadful thing to think that the last prayer over the remains of my precious boy had to be paid for! We have the receipt.

What would our blessed Savior say to that! Oh, keep telling us of God's love! It will help us to bear the cross as we go through life. If it were only known in the pure, simple way, how many dear, discouraged souls it would help! It is not to be found in the churches of today.

Very sincerely, MRS. E. H. LOMAS.

ECHOES SENTIMENTS OF MANY PRISONERS

DEAR SIR:—

As one of more than fourteen-hundred prisoners confined in Clinton Prison at Dannemora, N. Y., I wish to thank you and all concerned in the production of the PHOTO-DRAMA of CREATION. It has been a great privilege to view the pictures, and I have derived lasting benefit during these past four days.

I but echo the sentiments of every prisoner within these walls when I say that this exhibition has given us a better knowledge of creation, of God and of Christ than we could possibly get, unaided, from any other source. It has made a deep impression upon all of us. It has lifted our thoughts to a higher, better life and has given us a far better understanding of things of which we have heretofore been ignorant.

It would have pleased you to have witnessed the manner in which the pictures were received by the hundreds of men who are considered hardened criminals.

When the motion picture of Jesus' awakening of Jairus' daughter and the healing of the lame and blind was on the screen the prisoners voluntarily joined softly in the hymn of the phonograph singer. This was most impressive; and the man must indeed be hardened whose heart would not be moved.

Again thanking you, please accept greetings and best wishes for a continuance of your health.

Sincerely yours, WILLIAM F. GILLESPIE.

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THE SUM OF ALL GRACES

[With the exception of paragraphs below, this article was a reprint of that published in issue of Aug. 15, 1897, which please see.]

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."—1 Corinthians 13:13.

The Apostle Paul has just been referring to the various miraculous gifts of the Spirit then granted to all begotten of the Spirit to the new nature. Any one lacking some such special gift at that time would thus manifest to all believers that he had not become a member of the church of Christ. These supernatural gifts also served to assist the primitive church in spiritual growth. They did not have the Bible in those days, and if they had possessed it, but very few could have read it; hence, they needed special assistance which the church afterward did not need, and which later was taken away.

In this letter to the church at Corinth, the Apostle, after discussing these various gifts, says, "And yet I show unto you a more excellent way." Then he proceeds to point out the super-excellence of the fruit of love. Whoever has the holy Spirit must have a measure at least of this fruitage, whether it be the little flower that contains the fruit-bud or whether it be the partly developed fruit, the fully developed fruit or the ripened fruit. God our Father, who looks upon the heart, knows how his holy Spirit in the heart is seeking to control the flesh, to guide the mind and all the words and actions. We are not able to judge one another's hearts. The Apostle said that he did not feel able properly to judge even himself, but left judgment to the Lord. He knew that his heart was loyal and that he was endeavoring to be all that the Lord would have him be. Though he was conscious of his inability always to "do the things that he would," he knew that the Master would accept his loyalty of heart; so he would do his best and leave the remainder with God.

Our faith and our hope in the Lord lead us to earnest endeavor to develop the fruitage of love in all its varied and beautiful phases. Gentleness is a part of love; meekness is a part of love; so also are humility and brotherly-kindness. The question at issue with each child of God is not, How tall and well-built am I? or, How fine-looking or well-educated or well-connected am I according to the flesh? or, How many or how fine sermons have I preached? or even, How many have I brought to a knowledge of the Truth? But the vital question is, How much of the quality of love have I developed? How great is the likeness of my character to that of Christ?

LOVE IS THE PRINCIPAL THING

Why is this quality of love made so prominent in the Word of God? We answer, Because it is the first thing, the most important thing, the principal thing. It is the fulfilling of God's law; and, indeed, the sacrificial love enjoined upon God's saints of this age goes even beyond the requirements of the perfect law. But why is love put first? It is not because God arbitrarily so placed it, not because he exercised his power of fiat and declared that it should be first. No. It is because no other quality of character is so lovely, so beautiful, so productive of happiness and joy, so great a blessing to all upon whom it operates. It is the very essence of God's character. "GOD IS LOVE!" This quality particularly represents his personality. While God is all-just and all-powerful, we do not say that God is justice or that God is power, but that God is love. He uses his great power only as love dictates and approves. He uses his justice only in fullest harmony with his glorious attribute of Love, Love is the mainspring of all his doings.

Whoever, therefore, would be God-like must be loving, must have love as the dominating quality of his character and his life. Love and righteousness are inseparable. Love is to continue to all eternity; and only those who become the active embodiment of this gracious quality of character will live eternally. Hence we see the paramount importance of its development in every life.

THE WHITE RAIMENT OF THE KINGDOM

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."—Revelation 3:5.

In this text, as throughout the Bible, the thought is maintained that the elect class, who will receive the highest glory, honor and blessing from the Lord, must demonstrate their loyalty by overcoming. It is not sufficient that there shall be an overcoming of the will at the beginning of the Christian career, but subsequently there must be trials and testings endured, and these must be met in an overcoming manner. The consecration having been made, and the trials and testings having begun, the individual yielding under those temptations and testings, and continuing to be overcome by them, would prove that he is not sufficiently loyal; for the Lord has promised that his grace shall be sufficient in every time of need.—2 Corinthians 12:9.

Although the Lord's grace is sufficient, this would not mean that we might not sometimes fall into temptation. We might fall into temptation inadvertently, without the consent of our wills, and "be overtaken in a fault." But the Lord's grace is sufficient to bring us out of the temptations as overcomers, en-

abling us to triumph over them. Falling into temptation does not mean falling in temptation—falling when tempted. But when one is temporarily overcome, whether it be a yielding to a temptation of the flesh or whether it be a wilfulness of spirit, or mind, has much to do with the nature and degree of the sin. We may not always be able to triumph fully, completely, according to the flesh, but the will must be loyal. We must triumph in the mind, otherwise we shall not be overcomers.

This overcoming is a gradual work, progressing throughout our Christian course, from the moment of consecration down to the conclusion of life. But the text apparently takes hold of the conclusion, rather than the beginning or the middle of the work, and implies that the individual has at the end of the trial, the end of his race-course, this overcoming degree of righteousness, so that he may be classed as an overcomer. Such an overcomer will be clothed in white raiment.

WHITE RAIMENT LOANED TO US

The Scriptures give us to understand that at the very beginning of our Christian experience, we figuratively are clothed in white raiment. This white raiment represents justification —we are justified freely from all things. It is a robe without a spot. It is sometimes spoken of as Christ's robe of righteousness, because it comes to us through Christ. It is to be had only through him. He is able to impute to us, to loan to us, grant to us temporarily, this robe. It is spoken of as the wedding garment. At an oriental wedding, a wedding garment of white linen was used to cover over the clothing worn by each guest. It was loaned to the guest at the wedding by the host, when he appeared at the wedding-feast.

White linen signifies purity. So when Christ gives us the use of his merit, it is as a white garment to cover our imperfections. It is an imputation of his righteousness, which is to us justification. We are exhorted to keep our garments unspotted from the world. The imputation of righteousness given us, we are to preserve, to maintain. But we cannot fully maintain it of ourselves. Our tongues may sometimes say things that we wish they had not said, and our hands may sometimes do things we would not desire. Hence, God has provided a way by which our blemishes or transgressions may be eradicated—those not wilful. This way is our daily application for the cleansing of these unwilling transgressions, through the precious blood. Thus we keep our garments unspotted from the world. Thus our justification, our while robe, is maintained—should be maintained.

WHITE RAIMENT OUR OWN

But it is not sufficient that we have the imputation of our Savior's righteousness. This imputation is only a temporary arrangement. We need to come to the place where we shall have a righteousness of our own. Our flesh is imperfect; as St. Paul says, we cannot do the things which we would. In spite of our best endeavors things are bound to go more or less wrong. But we are to prove ourselves overcomers—"more than conquerors." The Lord has arranged that at the conclusion of our trial, at the end of the present life, all the overcomers shall receive the new body. This new body will be a body of actual purity. Thus, as the Apostle says, we shall "be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." So our raiment will be changed from a garment of imputed perfection, our justification by faith, to that which represents actual perfection. At the resurrection we shall receive that body of inherent purity, without blemish, without spot, which is here pictured as "white raiment."

"BROUGHT BEFORE THE KING"

Furthermore, we read of each of these that the Lord "will not blot out his name out of the book of life," in which are written the names of all those who become truly the Lord's people, those who have made with the Lord "a covenant by sacrifice," all who renounce their wills, who present their bodies a living sacrifice. The name of each of these is recorded, entered in the Lamb's book of life, when he starts to live the new life, and to demonstrate his loyalty. Just as these are clothed upon with the robe of Christ's righteousness in advance of being actually tested, so their names are written in that book in advance of being actually tested. If they do not remain faithful, their names will be blotted out of that book of life. But if they are faithful their names will not be blotted out of the book of life; and they will attain all those glorious things which are promised to those who love him supremely. —Revelation 21:7.

More than this, the Lord says, "I will confess their names before my father and before his angels." The intimation here is that the overcomers will have such characters that the Lord will not be ashamed of them, but will be pleased to own them in the presence of the Father and the holy angels. We are to be "changed from glory to glory," into the likeness of our Lord. (2 Corinthians 3:18) In the end, these overcomers will each be so grandly developed that the Lord will not be ashamed to confess any of them and to say, Here is one of my followers. Here is another. They have walked in my footsteps and have overcome. But he will be ashamed of any who are ashamed of him. Of such he says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."—Luke 9:26.

It is not a matter of favoritism, but of character-development. If they will not endure to the end, if they do not prove overcomers, they will not be fit for the kingdom and association with their Lord.

This brings up the thought that there is another class mentioned in the Bible—the great company class, as in contrast to the little flock—or the antitypical Levite class as in contrast to the antitypical priestly class. The great company had their names written in the Lamb's book of life, but they were not overcomers in the truest sense. They did not stand faithful. Because of not proving faithful, they will not be confessed before the Father and the holy angels in the same sense as the bride class.

It is stated that the bride will be presented before the Father, and that "the virgins, her companions" (Psalm 45: 13-15) will be there also—but the latter will not be confessed as the bride class. We will not say that their names will be blotted out of the Lamb's book of life. Their names may remain. But those who go into the second death will surely have their names blotted out of the book; they will be destroyed with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.

ROBES WASHED IN "THE GREAT TRIBULATION"

The great company will not have the "abundant entrance" granted the little flock. And the same distinction obtains between these two classes in connection with the white raiment. While all receive the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, some of them do not keep their garments "unspotted from the world." Their white raiment becomes spotted and soiled, bedraggled by contact with the earth. Their justification, or robe of Christ's righteousness, becomes unpresentable. When a spot comes upon it, instead of having the spot cleansed away at once, they allow it to remain, and the spots accumulate until their garment becomes quite soiled. Then at the conclusion of their course, when the examination day comes, their robe is found to be spotted—yet they wear it still. They are not divested of that robe of justification. They have not abandoned the Lord and he has not abandoned them. But they have failed to use the means which the Lord provided for their cleansing.

In the Revelation this class is spoken of as "a great multitude"—the great company. We are told that they "will come up out of the great tribulation, and will wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." Instead of doing a cleansing work day by day, maintaining their justification with God and being ready for the change (by means of their faithfulness) they are, on the contrary, found of him as unworthy of this chief place. Their robes will not be taken from them, but they will be obliged to suffer great tribulations, with the view to making them ready to wash and make their robes white in the blood of cleansing, so that they, also, will be clothed in white and in their resurrection bodies will be pure. But they will attain this only by passing through "the great tribulation."—See Revelation 7:9-14.

RETURNING TO BUSINESS

Some of our dear readers very commendably arranged their affairs some time ago so as to give their entire time to the harvest work, not anticipating the prolongation of the harvest —the gleaning work, the burning of the tares, the threshing of the wheat, etc. Moreover, many of them used in the harvest work nearly all of their surplus of this world's goods—striving to lay up treasure in heaven. Some of these dear brethren and sisters have nearly or quite gone to the limit of their possibilities, as far as present arrangements are concerned. They are, properly, looking about them to see the leadings of the Lord's providence in respect to their future operations. Will they plunge into business so deeply as to have little time for spiritual things? Will they become identified with some kind of speculation, and, perhaps, get others involved in what ultimately would be a loss? Or will they look for something to do in a quiet way that will enable them to meet expenses, possibly being able to continue to some degree in the gleaning work of the harvest? The latter is our expecta-

tion and, we believe, in accord with the Spirit of the Lord—the spirit of a sound mind.—2 Timothy 1:7.

Let us call to the mind the great disappointment of the Apostles in connection with the Redeemer's death. Up to within one day of his crucifixion they had thought that his remarks respecting death, crucifixion, etc., were figurative language, and that in reality he was about to be exalted to power and great glory. The experiences of that time must have been a severe test upon them in every way. Our Lord's resurrection the third day revived their hopes, although his appearances in miraculous manner indicated some wonderful change which they could not understand; but afterwards they learned that it was because he was no longer a man, but a perfected new creature of the divine nature.

Then came the long interval between appearances — for weeks at a time they saw nothing of him, heard nothing from him. Anxious, disappointing days!—their faith and patience weakened. Finally, utterly discouraged, St. Peter took the lead in announcing his determination to give up all thoughts of further preaching and to return to the fishing business. He announced, "I go a fishing." Promptly, his former partners responded, "We also go with thee." (John 21:3) Here were seven principal disciples, abandoning the great work to which they had been invited of the Lord—but doing so in their perplexity, with hearts as loyal as ever.

Evidently this was the occasion Jesus had waited for. We know of no other reason why he should remain forty days before ascending to the Father. He allowed the disciples to go back to their former business and to meet with discouragement. The very first night "they toiled all night and caught nothing!" Poor men! They must have felt as though everything was going against them. However, Jesus was watching over them all the while and purposely permitting them to come to this crisis, so that he might teach them a great lesson —and us through them. The lesson was that he was able to overrule all of their affairs, and that they should firmly trust him, come what might, so long as they were loyal and following his directions.

Discouraged as to confidence in their own abilities as business men, they were ready in the morning to see Jesus on the shore and to accept his invitation to breakfast with him from fish already cooked on the fire—from whence came the fish and the fire they knew not. These things were provided by miraculous power, as was the body of Jesus in which he appeared to them and the clothing he wore on it. Jesus said little to them, except to St. Peter—"Feed my sheep, feed my lambs, if thou lovest me." The Apostles took the lesson and returned again to the preaching of the Gospel as the main business of life. The Lord's blessing was with them. He provided for them according to their needs, although it was sometimes in prison; sometimes in fasting and hunger, nakedness and peril. He gave them of his best for their development as new creatures.

We do not wish to draw a parallel here and suggest that all the brethren should abandon earthly affairs, as did the Apostles. We are not Apostles. There were only the twelve. We are not to expect that we would have as important a work to do, nor that the Lord's providences would be so markedly exercised on our behalf. We are, however, to remember the Master's statement, "One is your Master, even Christ; all ye are brethren!" While the Apostles were more important brethren than us, still we are brethren; and One is our Lord, or Head, and we have all one Father. The divine promises assure us that all things shall work together for good to us, because we love God and have been called according to his purpose and are seeking to make our calling and election sure.

The lesson we do suggest is that the divine plan has not changed. The harvest surely is not ended. The great time of trouble has already begun. Although it is necessary for us to provide things decent and honest in the sight of all men, we are not to forget that our chief business is that of ambassadors for God—representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ—proclaimers of the Good Tidings of great joy which eventually shall be to all people. We are never to forget that we are to seek first, chiefly, the kingdom of God and the righteousness which it stands for and inculcates.

This is to be our chief work, the chief aim of life for us. Everything else is to be secondary. We are to expect that the Lord will give us necessary wisdom and grace if we seek it, whereby we may serve him with acceptance and still provide the things necessary for our bodily comfort, without entirely leaving the work. This would mean that we should watch and pray—asking the Lord's direction and then waiting to see which way his providences seem to direct our course. We should watch, also, against the wiles of the adversary, who would seek to ensnare us in business or pleasures or whatever.

Our advice is that all of the Lord's people put the kingdom and its interests first, in word, in thought, in deed—giving merely what time is absolutely necessary for the procurement of the things needful for our earthly comforts and the comfort of those dependent on us. Assuredly thus we would be following the example of the Master, pleasing to the Father and helpful to each other. Thus we would be examples to our neighbors, as well as be preparing ourselves for the kingdom.

"LIGHT AFFLICTIONS" HERE—"GLORY TO FOLLOW"

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body."—2 Corinthians 4:8-10.

The Apostle Paul is here addressing the church at Corinth, and in the larger sense addressing the entire church of the Gospel age. He is apparently describing to some extent the experiences of himself and those who were with him in his missionary labors. He traveled from place to place, but not as our pilgrim brethren now do; for sometimes he spent an entire year, sometimes more than a year, in one city. Nevertheless, he was a traveler, going about where other missionaries of the Lord had not gone, addressing the Jews and whoever else might give evidence of having a hearing ear. On these tours he took with him assistants. We are therefore to consider that his words here referred not only to the Apostles (for he was the only Apostle of the company), but also to others with him; and that this Epistle, as are all the inspired writings, was designed by the Lord for the instruction and benefit of all the saints throughout the Christian dispensation.

The Apostle's assistants were general ministers of the Lord, as are all God's children in proportion as they do a work of ministry. His words would seemingly be addressed, then, to all who are engaged in the Lord's service. In this Epistle he points out that there are differences in the services rendered—"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully"—and also differences in the experiences of the various members of the body of Christ. He says that some of them had been the objects of persecution and that others had shared in those persecutions by suffering with those so persecuted, indicating that the Lord recognizes and appreciates this association with those in distress, if there be such association.

This thought is brought out also in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. (Chapter 10:32-34) If those not so actively engaged in the service are faithfully doing all that their hands find to do, the Lord is as appreciative of it as he is of those who because of greater ability or physical strength or opportunities are able to accomplish more—each doing to the extent of his opportunity the work of the Lord.

The Apostle said of himself and his companions, and of all those laboring faithfully in the service of the Master, "We are troubled on every side." There are many troubles that are common to the whole human family—lack of employment, sickness, death, poverty, etc. There are multitudinous troubles which come to the world; and of course the Apostle and his companions were subject to these difficulties like other men. To many these trials of life bring distress. But while St. Paul and those with him had their ailments and difficulties, their persecutions and trials, they also had the knowledge of the truth and the Lord's sustaining grace; and they were enlisted in the army of the King of kings. They were not distressed by their troubles, but were trusting in the Lord's precious promises that these should all work out for their good.

"AS HE WAS, SO ARE WE, IN THIS WORLD"

And so we are not to allow the troubles of life to distress us as they distress other people. We have something that others do not have—the Lord's assurance that everything in our lives shall be a bearer of blessing to us if we are faithful. This enables us to rejoice in tribulation, if we really believe this promise of our Father's Word. There are other troubles that come to the Lord's people, but do not come to the world: The world is more or less in opposition to those who are engaged in publicity preaching the truth and to those who are

associated with them. There is a battle on between right and wrong, light and darkness. The world, being attached to their darkness, feel an enmity toward the light, a hatred of it; and they are often disposed to give special trouble to those who are the Lord's representatives in a particular capacity.

Occasionally we find worldly persons who are of good heart and kind intention and who are desirous of helping on a good work; but these are exceptions. Our strongest opposition, however, comes generally, as did that of the Master, from those who are our brethren, though many of them are only nominally so. Then we have the adversary particularly against us. It is true that the whole world have the opposition of the adversary, but he is especially active against those engaged in the public service of the Lord. Satan seems to bring before these special temptations, and it is not surprising that they should be the particular objects of his rage and of his wiles. But those who are thus engaged in God's service have special blessings at his hands, and extra fortifications. So while we may be sure that those in the public ministry have more troubles from the adversary, they are also given more grace to cope with them.

OUR DEATH THE GATEWAY TO LIFE

"We are perplexed, but not in despair," says St. Paul. The Apostle and his company were not the only ones who have been at a loss to know just what to do. The whole world has been perplexed, and are particularly so today. The general anxious uncertainty of our day results in a large measure, it would seem, from the nerve-racking experiences of the present time. If people knew the right thing to do in respect to their business, their homes and their affairs in general, they would not be so full of doubt and bewilderment. But no one is wise enough to get along without some perplexity; and present conditions in the world are causing much distress and also anxious foreboding for the near future. Those who are engaged in the work of the Lord have some perplexity. But the anxiety or uncertainty of the Lord's people should never go to the length of despair. Those who are of the world, getting out of work and being in various difficulties, become very despondent. Frequently we hear of suicides. Things look very dark to people who take their own life.

It may yet be true of the Lord's people that things will look very dark; but they are not in despair, and will not be in despair whatever may come; for the Lord has said that he will never leave us nor forsake us. This gracious promise should give us a hope sure and steadfast. Our anchor of hope should hold. Our position, therefore, is very different from that of the world, who have no particular hope. The world have no solid anchor, no precious promises to hold them fast. We know that if the worst comes to the worst, if we should even die of starvation, our hope lies beyond the veil, beyond death. Therefore God's saints of today look upon death as the gateway by which to enter into fulness of life, into a realization of all our hopes and joys. If, therefore, there is despair, it would prove that our anchorage has been cut loose. Whoever would find that he is in despair would find that he is letting go his faith, and should immediately seek counsel from the Word of God and from others strong in faith, and should go to the Lord in frequent and earnest prayer, assured that if faith is restored despair will go.

"I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE"

"We are persecuted, but not forsaken." There are persecutions of certain kinds that come to those in the world. Sometimes their neighbors have a grudge against them, and they thus are more or less persecuted. But they have no effective means of dealing with such a matter and nothing to comfort them. Sometimes they give as good as they get. But in the case of one of the Lord's children it is very different. When we feel that justice calls for retaliation, then we should remember that it is not ours to retaliate, to return evil for evil. The Lord has told us that we should leave all matters relating to justice in his hands. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." He does say that we are to run away from persecutions; therefore we are not to condemn those who run away as following a wrong course. We are told by the Master, "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." So if a child of God is persecuted in one neighborhood and he can get away to another neighborhood, it would be better to go.

But though persecuted for righteousness' sake, the Lord's people are not forsaken. The world and those possessing the world's spirit may harass and buffet them, but the Lord does not forsake them. When persecutions come to us, however, we are to inquire, "Are these oppositions and persecutions coming to me on account of my loyalty to the Lord, or is it that there is something in my disposition which causes them?" If the latter is the case, we should diligently endeavor to rectify our fault. If, on the other hand, we find by careful scrutinty of ourselves and our conduct that we have been doing our best, our very best, and that the persecutions are coming to us on this account, then we are to rejoice in the persecution.

We are "cast down, but not destroyed." This expression shows that while the Apostle and his companions did not suffer despair, did not feel forsaken, they sometimes felt a heaviness of spirit. This heaviness of spirit, or feeling of loneliness and depression, is natural at times to all mankind under the adverse conditions prevailing in the world. The weight of this casting down may be accentuated to some extent by the condition of the physical health. Those who are weak or in pain physically are apt to feel any mental pressure or trouble. This is all to be fought against in the Christian; for we know that our afflictions and disabilities are something outside and not of the Lord, except in the sense that he permits them for our development, for our future work in the kingdom. We are therefore to be of good courage. If the Lord permits us to have trouble, we are to exercise fortitude, to patiently endure, and not to allow it to destroy our faith or our happiness or our loyalty of spirit to him to whom we have vowed allegiance.

We are to put up with whatever our Father permits, in sweetness of temper, and to say to ourselves, "This may be a good lesson to me. Perhaps these cast-down feelings, this feeling of desolation, may help me to sympathize more with others." The poet has truly said:

> "Into each life some rain must fall,
> Some days must be dark and dreary."

So let us see to it that we do not allow this feeling of depression to conquer us and to destroy our faith and energy; but rather, looking to the Lord for assisting grace, and claiming his precious promises, we are to rise above the difficulty and press bravely onward.

OUR "COVENANT BY SACRIFICE"

We are "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." The Apostle thus declares that the Lord's people, in proportion as they are faithful in his service, have a likeness to the Lord in their service, in their death. Our Lord's experience in the narrow way was three and a half years of dying. He was daily laying down his life—surrendering his life. He was an Example to us of how we should surrender our lives. He laid down his life, not in the service of the world, but of the Lord's professed people. While the merit of his sacrificed life was to be used of the Lord for the life of the world, yet he laid it down in the direct service of his Jewish brethren.

The Hebrew people were the people of God. Our Lord spent his life especially with those who were truly desirous of pleasing God and knowing his will, whether found amongst the rich and influential or amongst the poor and lowly. Jesus welcomed publicans and sinners, and gave his life for them. He knew that among this humble class he would find the greater proportion of true wheat. He was laying down his life during all the three and a half years of his earthly ministry, and merely completed this work at Calvary.

And so it is with all of the Lord's true people. They have made "a covenant by sacrifice." They have consecrated, dedicated their lives to the Lord and his service; and as Jesus their Master laid down his life in doing good, in proclaiming the truth then due, so they are to lay down their lives in the same manner, whether the time of their ministry be three and a half years or twenty years or whatever it may be—until the Father's good time shall come for their deliverance. They will be in full harmony with the Lord and will gladly have fellowship in the sufferings of their great Head—and properly so; for they are prospective members of his body. Thus all of these members are continually bearing about in the body the dying of their Lord. They are dying daily as he died, "laying down their lives."

"THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY"

This is all the work of the new creature. The old creature is merely compelled to follow in the way of the new creature, and this setting aside of the will of the flesh is the basic feature of our dying. When our dying has been completed, our lives faithfully laid down, it will bring us to that condition where we shall hear the Master's "Well done!"

St. Paul also says that "the life of Jesus" is to be "made manifest in our body." We understand him here to be referring to the human body. The new creature owns this body. With the people of the world there are not two personalities, but merely the one creature. This quality of personality is applicable only to those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit. The old body is suffering; but the new creature rejoices, glad to be in the service—gives thanks to God day by day respecting its tribulations, knowing that these are work-

ing out "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Thus the life of Jesus is manifested through us to the world, and to the brethren. The world cannot understand. They say, "If I were in your place, in such a trial, I would be miserable. But you are rejoicing!" So they cannot understand. But we have a newness of life that the world cannot appreciate. All who can appreciate this should daily grow in grace and knowledge. We should show forth more and more of the Lord's life in our characters and in our bodies. Thus we shall be manifesting more and still more of the Lord's Spirit, doing more of the Lord's work, becoming more like Jesus—all of which will prepare us for the glory beyond, when the new creature shall be completed, when all the perfections and glories of the new nature will be ours.

"TOUCH NOT MINE ANOINTED"

MAY 16.—1 SAMUEL 26.

KING DAVID'S TRYING EXPERIENCES—THE CAVE OF ADULLAM—KING DAVID'S NEPHEWS—WATER FROM BETHLEHEM—DAVID TWICE SPARED KING SAUL'S LIFE—LESSONS OF THE HOUR.

"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you."—Luke 6:27.

Outlawed and hunted by King Saul, young David had a varying career. He was soon joined by a class of unfortunates, justly or unjustly ostracized from society. Some of them doubtless were criminals; some were debtors, liable to imprisonment, who fled to preserve liberty, etc. At all events young David soon found himself at the head of a company of about four hundred men, more or less armed, more or less desperate.

It was a great training for him in preparation for his kingdom work later on. It gave him an inside view of the conditions of the ne'er-do-wells of society. Himself and his little army doubtless subsisted upon foragings, collecting a toll in the nature of a tax from the farmers. In offset to this toll, or tax, David doubtless defended them from the marauders who frequently came, not only from the Philistines, but also across the Jordan from Moab. Evidently up to that time no adequate police protection had been provided by King Saul's government. Instead of guarding the interests of his subjects properly, the king was mad with jealousy against his faithful servant David, and from time to time instituted pursuits of him, much after the manner of hunting expeditions for wild beasts in the forest.

Amongst those who came to David were three of his nephews, sons of his sister. These afterward became very prominently identified with King David in all his work. One was Joab, who became the captain of the host, or general. Abishai and Asahel were the two others, men of ability, who afterward became renowned in the kingdom.

DAVID'S NOBILITY OF CHARACTER

For a time David and his company had the cave of Adullam as a stronghold. It is greatly to his credit that he refused to plunge his nation into civil war, as he would have been abundantly able to do. Evidently the majority of the people would have sided with him from the first, and his victory over King Saul might have been easily accomplished. And how easily he might have deluded himself into thinking that such would be God's will! He remembered that the Lord, through the Prophet Samuel, had anointed him to be the king; but he remembered also that it was not for him to take possession, but to abide God's time, when divine power would overthrow Saul's kingdom and give the control to himself as Saul's successor as king.

How blessed it would be if all of God's people would thus remember to wait upon the Lord! "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until that day when I rise up to the prey." The Lord's times and seasons are best for us, and any attempt on our part to push ourselves in advance of the Lord's will would be sure to react unfavorably. It was because David was thus full of faith in God and possessed of the spirit of obedience to him that he was called a man after God's own heart—not that he was perfect—not that he always did the Lord's will, but that the Lord's will was his real heart's desire; and whenever through weakness of the flesh he took a different course, he was prompt to repent on seeing the mistake, to implore divine forgiveness and to change his course.

Joseph Parker, commenting, says, "There is no straining of the meaning in discovering in all this picture a type of the position of Jesus Christ in the world. He was despised and rejected of men; he had not where to lay his head; and the people who immediately surrounded him were characterized by unaccountable expectations, personal inferiority, social degradation, and also by needs of every description; surely it was no valiant or brilliant host that gathered around the Son of God whilst he tenanted this Adullam cave which we call the earth."

While sojourning with his followers at the cave of Adullam, David, in a fit of home-sickness, referred to the fine well-water of his Bethlehem home, intimating how much he would relish it if he could have it here. Thereupon three of his faithful followers, one of them his nephew, undertook the perilous journey, unknown to David. It was perilous for two reasons: first, they were outlaws from King Saul; second, Bethlehem was in the hands of the Philistines at the time; but notwithstanding these difficulties these brave men manifested their love and loyalty to their leader, and brought a water-skin from the favored well.

When they arrived and presented it to David, he showed a wonderful loyalty of heart. Not only did he appreciate the great devotion that they had shown, the risk that they had run and the water that they had brought, but he declared it was too precious and gotten at too great a cost to be lightly used. He poured it forth upon the earth in oblation, a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Lord for the blessings they were enjoying and for the comfort and support of such loyal associates. Surely the greatness of David and his devotion to the Lord and his faith were well manifested again in this transaction! It marks him as more than an average man— a noble man.

TRAINING FOR KINGDOM WORK

By this time David and some of his followers were at a place called Nob, where Ahimelech the priest showed him kindness. King Saul, learning of this through a spy, slaughtered all the priests of that place and all of their lineage, eighty-five persons. This brought to David one of the sons of Ahimelech with the priestly ephod. One of the prophets had also joined David. All of this helped to make David's position the more secure, and to convince Saul all the more that God's favor was departed from him. Nevertheless Saul continued to fight against God and his divine program.

Under these circumstances David's forces gradually increased to the number of six hundred, increasing his experience also and preparing him the better for his coming work. As Bishop Wilberforce remarks, "A mighty training lay in that wild outlaw life for the knowledge and government of men. Nothing but the completest personal supremacy could hold such unruly elements under any species of command; and David, the unwilling head of such a following, learned in mastering them the secret of governing men and of knitting together their discordant hearts into an harmonious unity."

Every now and then King Saul would become feverish for the destruction of David. On one of these occasions, David and his company were occupying a cave amongst the bleak rocks on the west side of the Dead Sea, when King Saul, with probably a good-sized company, pursuing David, entered the same cave for rest and refreshment—for how long we know not. Kitto tells us that some of these caves are quite large enough to shelter fifteen hundred men. Another writer remarks, "A traveler indeed tells us that in one of them, which lies some twenty miles from En-gedi, no fewer than thirty thousand people once hid themselves. These caverns are dark as midnight. One can see outward clearly, but to see four paces inward is impossible."

David and his associates were further back in the cave; and when Saul and his company entered it to rest, the desire of David's band was that Saul at least should be killed, and that thus the trying experiences of them all might be ended and that a just recompense should be made for the evils the king had done and was doing. But David would not consent. Instead, however, he cut a piece from King Saul's robe as a demonstration that the king had been fully within his grasp, and that he could have killed Saul had he chosen—as a demonstration, too, of his loyalty to the king.

Then, when the king and his company had gone a certain distance so that there was no danger, David and his associates showed themselves and protested that the king was not appreciative of the loyalty of his subjects, and that he was seeking their lives when they would not take his. Saul's better nature was aroused; and he wept, saying, "Thou are more righteous than I." And for the time, the hunting of the outlaw David was abandoned with the promise that he would never do so again. Nevertheless, our lesson tells of another similar experience a little later on.

On this occasion David, with his nephew alone, went into Saul's camp and took away from beside his head his spear and his royal water-bottle. Departing with these, they from a distance on an opposite hill, a ravine between, could easily speak to Saul and his host and be heard. David pointed out to the king that he not only was more vigilant than Saul's soldiers, but that he was more loyal to the king's interests and that if a messenger were sent he would return both the spear and the bottle; that he wished no harm, but merely brought these away to further convince the king of his absolute loyalty; and that to pursue him as an enemy was a mistake.

Such an intrusion into the camp of a king today would be impossible because of modern methods of setting guards, pickets, etc., but not so in olden times, nor to any great extent in eastern countries today. We recall that Gideon and his band similarly invaded a camp. We recall Abraham's pursuit of the five kings, and his finding them enwrapped in slumber without proper picketing. A traveler of large experience in the East says, "The Arabs sleep heavily, especially when fatigued. Often when traveling my muleteers and servants have agreed to watch together in places thought to be dangerous; but in every instance I soon found them to be fast asleep, and generally their slumbers were so profound that I could not only walk among them without their waking, but might have taken the very covering from them."

A PROFITABLE LESSON

David's explanation of his unwillingness to take the life of his enemy was that Saul was God's anointed, and that to have made an assault upon him would have been to attack the Almighty's arrangements. This David could not conscientiously do. "Touch not mine anointed, and do my ministers no harm."

It is well that we of today should have in mind this principle. We are not to think of the kings of today as being the Lord's anointed, however. They are their own anointed. Their kingdoms are kingdoms of this world. On the contrary, Israel was God's special kingdom, which he had accepted under a special covenant arrangement. By divine authority King Saul had been anointed with special anointing oil, which typified the holy Spirit. David's anointing with the same oil was not to give him a right to interfere with the Lord's anointing previously accomplished in Saul, but to give him the assurance that he was to be the successor of Saul, not by his removing Saul, but by the Lord's giving the possession in his own time and way.

Although the coins of all the kingdoms of earth represent that their rulers reign and govern as representatives of Messiah's kingdom, we know that this is a mistake. Messiah's kingdom has not yet been established. We are still praying, "Thy kingdom come."

EARTH'S FIVE UNIVERSAL EMPIRES

When God removed his typical kingdom from the earth, the message to that last king, Zedekiah, was, "This shall not be the same. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is and I will give it unto him." Thus was intimated an interregnum, as far as divine rulership in the world was concerned, from Zedekiah's time until Messiah's Millennial kingdom. Meantime, however, God did give the Gentiles an opportunity to show what kind of kingdom they would be able to establish in the world. From the days of Zedekiah, 606 B. C., to the present time, we have had four distinct kinds of government, and the fourth one modified in a deceptive manner. These kingdoms were (1) Babylonia, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece, and (4) Rome. The present governments of Europe are the Roman Empire under a new gloss, or pretense. Their laws, methods and ambitions are the same as those of the Romans exactly; but deceiving and being deceived, they style themselves Christian kingdoms; and by common consent the whole world is accustomed to speaking of these as Christendom—that is, Christ's kingdom.

The Bible pictures this; and in the symbolic image which represented all these governments, the feet were of iron the same as the legs, but were smeared with miry clay to make them look like stone feet—stone being the symbol of God's kingdom. So these kingdoms of Europe today at war and manifesting anything but a Christian spirit—manifesting anger, malice, envy, hatred and strife, which the Apostle says are "works of the flesh and the devil"—these are the kingdoms which are claiming to be Messiah's kingdom, and are represented in the feet of the image, colored like the stone kingdom, which is shortly to fill the whole earth.—Daniel 2:31-45.

Messiah's kingdom is pictured as "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," without human power; and it, in the days of these kings, represented by the toes of the image, is to smite the image and grind it to powder; and the stone is to become the great mountain, or kingdom, of the Lord in all the earth. This smiting, we believe, is near at hand, the present war of Europe being intended of the Lord to weaken the nations and to prepare them for the next stage of trouble, the great earthquake, which in symbol signifies revolution.

Following the revolution quickly, is to come the great symbolic fire which is to destroy the present order of things entirely. This fire represents anarchy, the overthrow of all rule and authority. Thus God is allowing man to prove to himself that his best attainments are but imitations and ultimately lead to disaster. The lesson learned, all mankind will be ready for Messiah's kingdom, which will then be ushered in and be "the desire of all nations."—Haggai 2:7.

KING SAUL'S LAST BATTLE

MAY 23.—2 SAMUEL 2-5.

DISTRESSED, HE ASKED AID OF THE WITCH OF EN-DOR—DECEIVED BY EVIL SPIRITS—THE BATTLE LOST—SAUL AND JONATHAN SLAIN—THE SONG OF THE BOW, OR SAUL'S DEAD MARCH—DAVID KING OF JUDAH—THEN OF ALL ISRAEL.

"Jehovah is my strength and my shield; my heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped."—Psalm 28:7.

Today's study covers an interesting period in the history of Israel and in the experiences of David, the beloved of God. Persecuted and hunted by King Saul, no place was safe for David. The Philistines, desiring him for a friend rather than a foe, gave to David and his followers the city of Ziklag. While residing there, David's conquests were over the Amalekites, and never against the Israelites. He could not willingly battle against the Lord's people, though he felt free to fight against those whom the Lord declared were to be destroyed because their wickedness was come to the full, to the limit of divine permission.

Meantime, the end of Saul's reign was nearing. A fresh invasion of the Philistines required all the army he could muster, and then he felt very dubious respecting the results. Although as king, in harmony with the divine regulation, he had ordered all witches, wizards, and all who claimed to communicate with the dead to leave the land of Israel, nevertheless there were some here and there remaining. In his extremity, seeing the Lord would not answer him, King Saul visited the Witch of En-dor—said by some to have been the mother of the king's chief general, Abner.

The witch, after being assured that it would not work ill for her, got into communication with the fallen angels, who she supposed, as spiritualists still suppose, were the spirits of the dead. Doubtless she was honest, and thought it was Samuel that was called. But the Bible assures us that "the dead know not anything." Samuel was sleeping with his fathers, waiting for the resurrection morning, and could give no counsel, could know nothing about matters going on.

The evil spirits, however, in that time as well as now through mediums, personated the dead and, using their superior knowledge, answered as instead of the dead. The questions having been propounded in this case, the answer was that the king would lose the battle the next day, and that himself and his sons would be slain.

We do not know how the fallen angels know so much about the matters of our race, but we do know that it is unwise for any to have any dealings with them; for the Lord has forbidden it. Their sole object is to deceive the people; and, according to St. Paul, through dreams and revelations they have brought into the church various doctrines of devils (1 Timothy 4:1), which, becoming incorporated in our creeds, like the fly in the ointment, have made them to stink.—Eccl. 10:1.

Happy would it be for people if they realized what the Bible so clearly teaches; namely, that the dead are dead and can give no information of any kind, that they have neither joy nor suffering, but are simply in a state of suspended animation, awaiting the dawn of the better day in which Immanuel, Messiah, will bring the knowledge of the glory of God to all as the result of his ransom-sacrifice at Calvary. The teaching that the dead are more alive than they were when they were alive it not only senseless, but contradictory to the Lord's Word, and has become the foundation of all the various grievous errors which have distressed the reasoning faculties of Christian people. None would pray for the dead, or say masses for them for their release from purgatory, if they knew that their dead friends were merely sleeping until the resurrection morning.

But, worst of all, this theory that the dead are alive has become the foundation of serious blasphemies against God, in which all denominations are more or less joined as represented by their creeds. These blasphemies consist in declarations respecting God's character and plan which would be a disgrace to any devil, and are far from the character and attributes of the God of all grace, the Father of all mercies, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift.—James 1:17.

"THE SONG OF THE BOW"

When David heard of the results of the battle, his sympathy for Saul and for Jonathan was expressed in a beautiful poem, which is remarkable for the fact that it contains not a single suggestion of how Saul had persecuted him or sought his life. It compliments Saul for what good he had accomplished. It tells of the tender love of Jonathan, surpassing that of women. This ode is recorded in 2 Samuel 1:17-27, The Dead March from Saul is an attempt on the part of the musician to put the sentiment of David's Song of the Bow for Jonathan and Saul into the music of our day; and thus it has become identified with the funeral services of the great today.

In the battle Saul's sons were killed, including Jonathan. Saul himself was wounded. Fearing that if he should fall into the hands of the Philistines alive they would torture him to death, he desired his armorbearer to slay him, and finally suicided with his own sword.

A young Amalekite, thinking to curry favor with David, and knowing something of how he had been persecuted by Saul, brought him the news of the death of Saul and gave him Saul's crown and the bracelet that was on Saul's arm, telling that he had dispatched King Saul at the latter's request—probably, however, manufacturing this part of the story to bring honor to himself. At all events, David received the matter in a totally different way from what was expected, saying to him, "How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" David then commanded him to be put to death. But for Saul and Jonathan he mourned until evening.

David waited upon the Lord those many years, fully confident that in the end he should be the king of Israel, but not hastening the event in any way, simply standing ready for the responsibilities and the power of the office where the Lord should put him. What a wonderful example we have in David's course! How much Christians can learn of patient waiting for the Lord's time in all their affairs—not only waiting for the kingdom while they pray, "Thy kingdom come," but also waiting for the Lord's leading and providence in all their affairs, overruling them all for good! It is one of the too frequent mistakes made by Christians, that they overlook the Lord's providence and promised supervision of their interests, and attempt to do for themselves, often to their own disadvantage.

David realized that the time had probably come for himself and his companions to move from the Philistines' country, and he inquired of the Lord by the priest and the ephod. The answer was that he should go into Judea. Next he made inquiry, Into which city? and the answer was, Hebron. Thither David and his companions removed with their families; and the tribe of Judah, his own tribe, promptly recognized him as their king. It was over seven years after this, however, before he became the king of all Israel. Meantime, one of the sons of King Saul, Ishbosheth, had survived, and Abner, Saul's chief general, had him anointed king of Israel. King David of Judah made no attempt to coerce the other tribes, but continued his waiting for the Lord's due time.

Meantime, however, Abner gathered an army against David's servants, and a fierce battle ensued, in which David's forces were the victors; the others lost the fight. Finally Abner, angered with King Ishbosheth, proposed to David that he would become David's vassal, and would assist in turning the hearts of all the Israelites toward him. King David appreciated the proposition, doubtless considering it to be the Lord's will and in harmony with the Lord's promise. However, the matter did not so carry out; for Joab, David's nephew, the chief man of war, slew Abner deceitfully. Again we see David's conduct in contrast with the average sentiment of his time. Instead of rejoicing in the death of Abner, the king mourned for him, and denounced his nephew for the wrong course he had pursued. He was courageous enough in the presence of his own ablest soldier to extol the virtues of Abner as a great soldier, saying, "A mighty man has fallen in Israel."

KING OF ALL ISRAEL

But a little while after this, others, misunderstanding King David, slew King Ishbosheth and brought his head to David as an evidence of his death, expecting doubtless that they would be rewarded. On the contrary, they also were condemned. They had slain the king. They were esteemed worthy of the same punishment, and were themselves slain. Thus did the people see exemplified in David's course principles of righteousness quite uncommon in his day, and we might say, uncommon still. All these things served to endear to the people the king, who, they perceived, was not merely self-seeking, narrow, but was broad-minded and even generous toward his opponents, his enemies. He seems to have had a great appreciation of justice and also a breadth of sympathy for his enemies.

King David was thirty-seven years old when finally the eleven tribes sent a delegation to confer with him, indicating that they would appreciate having him as the king over all Israel. This was seven years and a half after the death of King Saul, and probably about seventeen years after David had been anointed first by Samuel. Faith and patience mark every step of those years and show us King David's character as we could not otherwise have known it. Its grandeur was chiefly shown in that it manifested a devotion to God and a submission to the divine will.

The king's acceptance as king of all the tribes of Israel marked the third time that the holy anointing oil was put upon his head.

Meantime King David had grown stronger and stronger in conquering his enemies—the enemies of the Lord—those whom God declared should be destroyed. We remind our readers afresh that the Lord declared that the iniquity of the Amorites had come to the full, and thus indicated it to be his will that they should be destroyed from the earth. Whether destroyed in battle or by pestilence or famine, mattered nothing to them, as the divine sentence of death must be carried out.

However, all the while that God has been permitting sickness, war, famine, pestilence, death, to reign in the world, he has been preparing for human redemption, human salvation through the great Redeemer. Messiah's kingdom is soon to take control of the earth, to cause a cessation of the reign of sin and death, to cause the binding of Satan and to cause the sunlight of divine truth to flood the earth. Then all the blind eyes will be opened and all the deaf ears will be unstopped, to know, to understand the true God, his true message.

Meantime, those who died by Israel's sword will know nothing of the lapse of time. They will awake in the Millennial kingdom, when all that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. They will then be under the most favorable conditions we could ask for them—freed from the shackles of ignorance and superstition, with Messiah's kingdom ready to help them out of their weaknesses and degradation back to human perfection, lost in Eden, redeemed at Calvary.

INTERESTING ITEMS

THE TYPEWRITER AND PROGRESS

Among the great inventions of our day is the typewriter, It came upon the market just forty years ago, in 1874, as a merchantable and usable convenience, after having been seven years in process of development. The Bible, we believe, marks that same year, 1874, as the beginning of the harvest of this age. What a wonderful forty years it has been? What wonderful blessings these years have brought to mankind! What evidence they give of the dawning of the new dispensation, which the Bible teaches began there! Notice some of the great inventions—the telephone, electric light, trolley-car, perfecting printing press, cheap pulp paper, linotype and monotype machines, gas engine, automobile, aeroplane, talking machine, moving pictures, and a hundred other conveniences, improvements, etc., not forgetting the wireless telegraphy.

Great as are the blessings enumerated, none of them surely can compare with the great blessings that God has given to his consecrated people, who have in these same years been seeking the light of the new dispensation in the Word of God. The blessing, joy and enlightenment which they have received is beyond all comparison and all valuation!

WAR HASTENING MILLENNIUM

If anyone had suggested a year ago the possibility of total abstinence being established by law in Russia, Germany and Great Britain, he would have been considered idiotic. Truly

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

Men, in the interest of war, are preparing to abolish intoxicating liquors. Russia already has done this. The report is that her millions of people are blessed greatly for the better—improved mentally and materially. Germany is already dis-

cussing the matter. The Prime Minister of Great Britain and the King favor total abstinence as a war necessity because the workers are hindered by the use of liquor from accomplishing the work necessary to be done for the prosecution of the war. How wonderful this appears! Is the light of the Millennial morning breaking upon the world?

Look again! Great Britain and Germany have been fearing Socialism and every way seeking to combat it as destructive of present institutions. As we have already pointed out many of the Socialists will be identified with the Millennial kingdom. How strange to find that the great war now raging is tending toward Socialism—that while Socialists have joined the army the Governments at war are adopting socialistic measures!

For instance in Great Britain: Speedily after the declaration of war the British Government took over the control of all the railroads of the kingdom, to facilitate the moving of troops and war materials. Now the British Parliament has given the Government full authority to take over the entire manufacturing business of Great Britain and place it under a central management, with a view to increasing the output of war materials. This bill, which passed on March 9th, the Hon. Andrew Bonar Law declared as a measure, "probably the most drastic ever laid before Parliament." It passed unanimously.

In Germany the Government's action has been no less drastic—the Government has absorbed all power. The extreme in this direction was the seizing of all food supplies and the doling of the same out to the people according to their needs, dictating the proportions of ingredients, the quantity to be eaten and the price to be paid. Could any Socialist imagine the principle for which he contends more fully put into execution—by those, too, who have opposed Socialism in the past?

How will it be when this war shall end? Will individualism and private ownership return to the control of affairs in Great Britain and Germany? If the attempt is made to restore them, will it not bring a clash? Will it not bring the great social earthquake which the Bible declares will immediately follow the war? And will not that social earthquake lead straight on to the fire of anarchy, as the Bible indicates? We so believe: We must with patience wait, nor attempt to hasten the Lord's arrangements. However, let us remember that the Lord declares that he will hasten these things at the present time and that a short work will he make of matters.

Speedily the glorious kingdom will be established, even though it be through blood and earthquake and fire. How, then, will those feel who are deriding the thought that Messiah's kingdom is in process of establishment—that this war is identified with its establishment and that it will be fully inaugurated in the midst of the fire of anarchy, which it will quench by bringing in the new order of things—the new heavens and the new earth—the new ecclesiastical and the new social order—the doing of God's will on earth.

MEMORIAL SUPPER REPORTS

We have excellent reports of Memorial celebrations this year. It would appear that everywhere it has been the same as here in New York—larger attendance and a deeper appreciation than on any preceding occasion. The New York City congregation had a most impressive service at THE TEMPLE. It was good to be there! A spirit of sweet solemnity, confidence, rest, seemed to pervade the large gathering in The Temple's fine auditorium.

In harmony with our well-known suggestions, the different little classes in the suburbs of New York held their own separate meetings for the celebration of the Memorial, even though they reckon themselves part and parcel of the New York and Brooklyn congregations, and meet as one church. The reports as to numbers participating show considerable progress during the past year. Quite a number partook of the emblems for the first time. Many of the new ones were more or less attracted to the truth through the opposition which the enemy has been stirring up. The evil attacks led to examination; and the truth was all the more beautiful and forceful in its contrast with the error. If the ministers of the various churches become more violent and slanderous they will, no doubt, awaken all of God's true saints and draw their attention more or less to the truth. For a saint of God to come into contact with the truth is almost like bringing a piece of steel into close relationship with a magnet.

Nor is the increase of numbers, of interest and of deep piety in the New York congregation alone. Everywhere, so far as our reports go, the same principle seems to be applicable and the same results inevitable.

We subjoin reports from some of the congregations already heard from. Compared with the reports of last year the showing is very fine.

Other reports from Memorial celebrations are coming in gradually. Although we have noted only those showing twenty-five or more in attendance, this does not signify that we are not deeply interested in having the reports from every celebration. Please send them in, therefore, as they become the basis of our judgment in other matters connected with the interests of the classes.

New York City	1119	St. Joseph, Mo.	82	Des Moines, Ia.	43	Harrisburg, Pa.	30
London Tabernacle	769	Allentown, Pa.	80	Port Huron, Mich.	43	Pittsfield, Mass.	30
Forest Gate	368	Swampscott, Mass.	75	Lawrence, Mass.	43	Muncie, Ind.	30
Chicago, Ill.	720	Grand Rapids, Mich.	75	Johnstown, N Y.	42	Waterbury, Conn.	30
Los Angeles, Cal.	445	Atlanta, Ga.	71	London, Ont.	42	Flint, Mich.	30
Pittsburgh, Pa.	415	So. Chicago, Ill.	70	Montreal, Que.	42	Ottawa, Ont.	30
Boston, Mass.	415	Camberwell, Jamaica	70	Terre Haute, Ind.	40	Ft. Smith, Ark.	30
Detroit, Mich.	356	Hamilton, Ont.	70	Bloomfield, N. J.	40	Paragould, Ark.	30
Philadelphia, Pa.	300	Youngstown, O.	69	Watertown, N. Y.	40	Tonawanda, N. Y.	30
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.	266	Rockford, Ill.	67	New Castle, Pa.	40	Newark, O.	30
Toronto, Ont.	259	Hartford, Conn.	66	Camden, N. J.	39	Colorado Springs, Colo.	30
Seattle, Wash.	256	Pasadena, Cal.	65	Joplin, Mo.	39	Syracuse, N. Y.	29
Cleveland, O.	240	Birmingham, Ala.	64	Bay City, Mich.	39	Kewanee, Ill.	29
Vancouver, B. C.	237	Edmonton, Alta.	64	Passaic, N. J.	38	St. Petersburg, Fla.	29
Portland, Ore.	219	Newark, N. J.	64	Knoxville, Tenn.	37	Iola, Kans.	29
St. Louis, Mo.	203	Tampa, Fla.	62	Mattoon, Ill.	37	Chatham, Ont.	29
Washington, D. C.	196	Altoona, Pa.	61	Auburn, Ind.	37	Brandon, Man.	29
San Antonio, Tex.	185	Memphis, Tenn.	61	Chattanooga, Tenn.	36	Johnstown, Pa.	29
Cincinnati, O.	185	Panama City, Panama	60	Sidney, N. S.	36	New Philadelphia, O.	28
Indianapolis, Ind.	183	Oklahoma City, Okla.	59	Santa Ana, Cal.	36	Anna, Ill.	28
Buffalo, N. Y.	173	New Albany, Ind.	59	Piqua, O.	35	Kalamazoo, Mich.	28
Columbus, O.	167	San Diego, Cal.	58	Crooksville, O.	35	Tamaqua, Pa.	28
Dayton, O.	165	Norfolk, Va.	57	Paterson, N. J.	35	Owen Sound, Ont.	28
Providence, R. I.	159	Omaha, Neb.	56	Springfield, Ill.	35	Elwood, Ind.	28
Kansas City, Mo.	154	New Haven, Conn.	55	Saginaw, Mich.	34	Haverhill, Mass.	28
Milwaukee, Wis.	153	Schenectady, N. Y.	53	Boise, Idaho	34	Zion City, Ill.	28
Oakland, Cal.	146	Jackson, Mich.	52	Brockton, Mass.	34	Magnet, Ind.	27
Toledo, O.	145	Bridgeton, Barbadoes	52	Warren, O.	34	Butler, Pa.	27
Victoria, B. C.	119	Dallas, Tex.	51	Springfield, O.	34	Boaz, Ala.	27
Baltimore, Md.	118	Aurora, Ill.	51	Canton, O.	34	Hobart, Okla.	27
Louisville, Ky.	113	Scranton, Pa.	50	Sacramento, Cal.	34	Beaumont, Tex.	27
Roseland, Ill.	112	Troy, N. Y.	50	Lima, O.	34	Norristown, Pa.	26
Oldham, England	106	York, Pa.	50	Tiffin, O.	33	Toronto, O.	26
Edinburgh, Scotland	102	Cumberland, Md.	48	Van Buren, Ark.	33	Brazil, Ind.	26
Lancaster, Pa.	101	Cromwell, Conn.	48	The Dalles, Ore.	32	Port Clinton, O.	26
Bellingham, Wash.	100	Easton, Pa.	48	Glens Falls, N. Y.	32	Tulsa, Okla.	26
Spokane, Wash.	98	Sharon, Pa.	47	Hollister, O. (Hung.)	32	Calmar, Alta.	26
Houston, Tex.	96	Wilmington, Del.	46	Wheeling, W. Va.	32	Fairmont, W. Va.	26
Tacoma, Wash.	92	Jacksonville, Fla.	45	Berne, Switz.	32	Lowell, Mass.	25
Springfield, Mass.	90	Akron, O.	45	E. Liverpool, O.	31	Cortland, N. Y.	25
Richmond, Va.	87	Reading, Pa.	45	Chester and Moore, Pa.	31	New Orleans, La.	25
Binghamton, N. Y.	82	Topeka Kans.	45	Jamestown, N. Y.	31	Rosenberg, Tex.	25
Worcester, Mass.	82	Moline, Ill.	44	Duluth, Minn.	31	Madison, Wis.	25
		Wichita, Kans.	43	Kirkaldy, Scotland	31		

"THE END OF THE AGES"—CONDITIONS SIMILAR

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you."—John 15:18.

By the word "world" the Lord did not mean Gentiles; else he would have said Gentiles. Had he said Gentiles it would have signified all the peoples not in covenant relationship with God. But when he used the word "world" he seemed to signify the present order of things, and therefore the people of the present order; for there would be no present order except through the people. He would mean those who had religious influence—the representatives of the people.

But the special order of that day was made up of the scribes, Sadducees, Pharisees, chief priests and the Doctors of the Law—those interpreting the law. Those who represented the law, and thus represented the people, would have to do with that order of things particularly. We know that these hated the Lord. As he said elsewhere, they hated the light. They hated him, not because he really did them any harm, but because his teachings, and the light that shone from his life and teachings, were contradictory to themselves, and to their plans, schemes and arrangements. If his words were true, all the plans they had made in all those years would be shown as coming to naught. In proportion as they had confidence in their own plans, Christ and his followers would seem to be fools, trying to do some impracticable thing.

Our Lord's principal opposition, then, came from the religious rulers, the teachers and the Jewish politicians. There were the Sadducee party and the Pharisee party. The Sadducees believed in nothing beyond what they could see. They were agnostics. The Pharisees were a very strict religious sect, pre-eminently the holiness people of the Jews. They were very scrupulous regarding outward forms and ceremonies, but as a class were very haughty, self-righteous and unjust. Whoever fell in line with Jesus' teachings would not have any particular interests in either of these sects or in their teachings—would not especially respect them and consider them the great ones of their nation. While at variance amongst themselves, these religious rulers were one in their opposition to Jesus.

It was these sects, together with the scribes and Doctors of the Law, who incited the people to crucify Jesus. We are not to suppose that these learned men——men of considerable education and intelligence—got out into the streets with the people and hurrahed for Barabbas and shouted against Jesus; but rather that they incited the rabble, and themselves assumed a more dignified line of conduct. At all events, their course led to the Lord's death. Not only did they hate the Master, but they hated him with such a bitterness and such resentment as to destroy him. They plotted his death several times, but they could not take him until his hour had come. The Pharisees acknowledged that a great miracle had been performed in the raising of Lazarus, but they determined that Jesus should be destroyed on account of this great miracle, because it would influence the people, and the people would in that same proportion become alienated from themselves.

The high priest, Caiaphas, said, "It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (John 11:47-53) The leaders of the nation feared that the people would be so influenced by Jesus' teaching that they would themselves avail nothing, and that "the Romans would come and take away their place and their nation." They said, "We are the guardians of this nation. The government at Rome would pay no attention to this rabble here. If we fail, God's cause in the earth will be blotted out. It is therefore expedient that we should destroy this man." The difficulty was that they had a wrong view of God's cause and of their nation. They were leaving God out of the account. They were thinking that they must do the whole thing. They were forgetting that God is the One All-Powerful and is at the helm.

SHINING OF TRUTH EXPOSES ERROR

As respects the true people of God the Master said, as recorded in our text, "Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you." We see that it is in proportion to their faithfulness as followers of the Lord Jesus that the Lord's people are hated and persecuted. There was a long period of persecution in the early days of the church—first by Nero, then by Diocletian and others of the Roman Emperors. Then came the general rise of the Antichrist, culminating in the establishment of the great misrepresentation, the counterfeit, of God's kingdom, in the year 539 A. D. These also hated the true church and held them in contempt. The latter were chimerical, was the thought—they were poor thinkers, they took the words of Jesus too literally, they thought too much about a future kingdom instead of about the present kingdom. Then followed the long night of bloody persecutions, during the entire papal Millennium. [799 A. D. to 1799 A. D.] The true followers were not numerous, and were chiefly the poor of this world—not many great, not many learned—but rich in faith. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" —1 Corinthians 1:26; James 2:5.

Coming down to our day, in proportion as the people of the Lord are following in the footsteps of Jesus they will wish to let their light shine out upon others. In proportion as they let their light shine, it will show the misconceptions and errors of the present order of things in the world. Here in our day as in Jesus' day, truth shows forth and rebukes the error, and those who promulgate the Truth are more or less hated because of this. Today, as in the days of our Lord's first advent, there is a religious system which is more or less mixed up with politics. Its adherents plan all kinds of reforms. They say, "If we can destroy the white slave traffic and the liquor traffic, we shall have nearly brought in the Millennium. Electing wise rulers will help in bringing in the new order of things." But much as we sympathize with these good efforts we perceive that as a whole such plans are not God's plan in respect to the future kingdom. Present institutions are not to be repaired, but replaced by the "new heavens and new earth" conditions.

We must not find special fault with reformers, however, and their efforts to put patches upon the old garments. We are to have sympathy for anything that is making for good, for righteousness. We are to leave the world to do the best they can, and we are to give our attention to God's plan and the great reform he is to bring in. The instruction to us is that we should get ready for a place in the kingdom, and should help other children of God that they, too, may make their calling and election sure, and be ready for the kingdom. That kingdom, which is now just at hand, will be God's agency for destroying sin and exalting righteousness.

PUTTING DARKNESS FOR LIGHT

All this seems like a foolish tale to the world; for it would mean defeat to their projects. It would upset all the plans of Churchianity. If the people thought as we do it would mean great disaster to all the denominations. The people would not be nearly so much interested in building up these systems or in raising money as they would be in seeking to do the work of the Lord in the world. If our view should prove true, and should gain the confidence of the people, to that extent all man-made systems would become unpopular. They would all be put to shame in comparison with the truth. Hence their promoters think that to hide their darkness and call it light is necessary for their prosperity. They think that it is necessary for them to burn our books and to keep our sermons out of the newspapers, etc. All this seems to them to be the wise course. They perceive that they and their systems would utterly fall if our teachings were generally received by the people.

"GREAT, SWELLING WORDS"

These church systems claim that they have witnessed for Christ's kingdom for eighteen hundred years. Roman Catholics say, "We have made a great institution! See the millions of money that we have invested! See how much we are in favor with the various governments; and we are hoping soon to get control of all the governments. Then we will conquer the world!" So say the Methodists, the Baptists, and all the rest of them. "We must conquer the world! This is the way the kingdom must be set up!"

Thus they go about to establish their own plans. When they do study the Word of God, they study it with sectarian spectacles on their eyes; and they think that "the church" is now in the condition soon to cause every knee to bow and every tongue to confess. They say, "If these Millennial Dawn people go about and tell that there is only a 'little flock' in the true church, people will remember that we have been boasting of our big flock. What do you say, Roman Catholic flock? What do you say, Lutheran flock? Methodist flock? Baptist flock? Presbyterian flock? Do we not claim that there are four hundred million Christians in the world? Shall we let an insignificant people come around and say that there are only a handful in the church, and that all the rest of us

are frauds? It is an implication that our great institutions are wrong. If these people are going to turn the world upside down, and bring us into disrepute, we must put them down before it is too late. Something must certainly be done!"

OUR FIERY CHARIOT

So we see there is hatred there. The Lord's true people are striving for a perfect ideal; they are striving for the likeness to the Lord as representatives of our Lord Jesus Christ. But this is not what the religious people hate so much. It is the disturbing of their institutions—the shaking and rocking of their boat. They are afraid that they will be capsized in the sea. It is the spirit of the world in them that hates the Lord's faithful ambassadors. Some of the noble-minded of the world now see somewhat of the truth. This is the more exasperating to these church people who are not fully in harmony with the Lord.

What this may eventually lead to we do not know. But there are Scriptures which seem to indicate that the closing of the career of the true church will be one of persecution. We understand that Elijah was a type of the church. His last experience was his being carried away in a chariot of fire. It was the agency by which he was taken from the world. So in the close of this world (age) the Lord may take away his people in a fiery trouble—but it will be the chariot to carry them home, to glory, honor and immortality, to participation with Jesus in the divine nature. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."—Romans 2:7; 8:17; Luke 12:32; 2 Timothy 2:12.

"THESE THINGS" THAT WE MUST DO

"If ye do these things, ye shall never fail."—2 Peter 1:10.

The context preceding the words of the above text shows us that the Apostle has been urging the development of the fruits of the holy Spirit in the heart, and so far as possible in the life—in the words, the deeds, the thoughts. He sums up his argument by saying that those who, following his advice in this matter, add one after another of these qualities and so build up their Christian character, will "never fall." The implication is that there would be some tendency to fall, some testings; and that this development of character would be necessary in order that the individual might be able to stand these tests. So the Apostle's assurance is that those who do not fall, who stand all the tests, will be granted an abundant entrance "into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"—the very thing that all of the Lord's people are invited to share.

We whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened can realize the strength and reasonableness of the Apostle's argument; yet these things have not been much taught in a logical way. Errors of the dark ages have hindered and made void the teachings of the Apostles. The thought given out by the creeds of the past is that only a mere handful would be saved, and that the rest of the world would be banished to an eternity of torture and woe unspeakable. Many of the world have taken this in a light way, have been incredulous—declaring that they would take their chance, etc. Others, who were of the Lord's people, have been frantic in their efforts to save as many as possible from the threatened eternal torture. Some had it that unless they belonged to a certain class, or cult, or had a certain kind of baptism, or turned away from sin and joined some church, they were sure of never-ending and unspeakable suffering beyond this life.

With these ideas in their minds, it is not strange that they were too busy to study the Word of God with sufficient care to see what it really teaches, and that therefore they adopted plans of their own for saving the world. These deluded ones seem to be quite active in what they term soul-saving work. We cannot but admire their courage and zeal, even though it be not according to knowledge. If their premise were correct, then every Christian should be rushing around as though demented, in his endeavors to save the world.

Suppose that a great fire broke out but a few doors from us, that there was no fire department accessible, and that hundreds were in imminent danger of being burned to death, though we were ourselves safe from the fire. Suppose that then some one would say to us, "Come, let us have a Bible Study." We would be sure to answer quickly, "No indeed! There are many people in that building who will be burned to death unless they are quickly rescued!" We would be in such haste and such eagerness to save the lives of the endangered ones that we would stop for nothing else.

DOCTRINAL CONFUSION OF MANY CHRISTIANS

So the great adversary has filled the minds of many Christian people with the vagary that the world is in imminent danger, not of being burned to death, but of being precipitated into a lake of burning brimstone or into an abyss of unimaginable horror and woe, there to be preserved in torture throughout unending ages! He has thus engaged Christians in an imaginary assault upon the devil, to rescue souls from this eternity of torment. Not until our eyes are opened and we see that there is no such provision for the heathen, or for anybody, can we begin to exercise the spirit of a sound mind. When we come to understand God's arrangement, everything changes before our mind's eye. We then see that God has made full provision for the heathen and for all men, and we realize that.

"Faith can firmly trust Him,
Come what may."

We see that our work as Christians is to co-operate with God in the salvation of the church class—not a salvation from eternal torture, but from death, and to glorious inheritance with Christ in his coming kingdom. We see that this great work has been progressing during the Gospel age, and in an orderly manner.

This blessed union with Christ which God has arranged for the church is to be soon consummated by a marriage feast; and then, in the kingdom to be established under the whole heavens, she as his bride will with him have the blessed opportunity of uplifting and delivering fallen humanity, the entire race of Adam, of restoring men, "whosoever will," to the glorious estate which was lost by Adam and redeemed by Christ Jesus the Lord through the blood of his cross. How wonderful it is to realize how all-embracing is God's marvelous plan of salvation—that it includes in its gracious provision not only those now living, but also all who have gone down into the tomb! With the eyes of our understanding thus enlightened, the delusions are taken away from our minds, and we begin to use our reason and to see the beautiful, wonderful things which God planned from before the foundation of the world.

DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION LOST TO MAJORITY

As we reason, we see that the primary consideration with us is our sanctification. "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." When we thought that the salvation of the world was dependent upon our feeble efforts here in the flesh, we had little time to study the Bible or to think particularly about our sanctification. Indeed, the thought of sanctification faded away from the minds of the majority of professing Christians; and for a Christian to press the importance of this doctrine was to brand himself as a religious fanatic. The general thought has seemed to be that those who were really thus set apart were surely so small a number that sanctification could not be God's plan for the church. So the many drifted apart from the Scriptures, and thought that only those guilty of most heinous crimes would be punished with eternal torment, and that all others would by some means get into heaven. People have thought, and this thought seems to prevail today to an increasing extent, that unless one dies a murderer or a lawless, disreputable character, he will somehow be saved.

"If a person can squeeze into heaven without any sanctification, so much the better," is the thought. "Do not try to get up too high. Do not try to get one of the chief seats in heaven. Take a lowly place"—crawl in under the gates, perhaps! And thus many have tried to believe that they and their friends would go to heaven. Our Catholic friends have been taught that they must go to purgatory for awhile. But nearly all others have hoped that they would get to heaven at once. This idea of sanctification, of being holy as our Lord was holy, of walking in the footsteps of Jesus, is not the Bible view at all, according to their thought. They did not consider it the Bible view because they did not know the Bible teachings, and because they did not wish to conform themselves to so narrow a way—the broader, easier way was much more pleasant to the flesh. They could not believe that God would be intent upon roasting nearly everybody—surely he would be content to roast the most degraded heathen and the worst characters of Christendom.

OUR "REASONABLE SERVICE"

So these have accepted what seemed to them to be a reasonable moral standard, instead of endeavoring to find out what the Bible calls our "reasonable service." The great Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the church at Rome (Romans 12:1), says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, ac-

ceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." When we get rid of these erroneous thoughts and ideas and get the spirit of a sound mind, we begin to see more of God's wonderful plan—of his justice, wisdom, love, power, of his purpose for his children now, and his arrangement for the world by and by.

When light begins to break in upon the mind, and a glimpse is seen of God's gracious plan of salvation, there is a danger that those whose hearts are selfish and lacking in gratitude will lapse into even greater worldliness, that they will pay very little attention to Bible study for the development of the fruits of the Spirit, feeling that it will be well with them in the future in any event, and they will delve into business, money-making, pleasure etc. Others on the contrary, feel an earnest desire to render thanks to the Lord for his great mercy and love as manifested in his glorious plan of the ages; they seek to know what is the Lord's will for them that they may do it, and say, "The fact that God is not such a demon as to torture eternally any of his creatures, but has so marvelous and loving a plan for all, makes me want to serve him all the more." As the Apostle Paul said, the truth is "to the one the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life," and reveals the real sentiment of the heart.—2 Cor. 2:16.

THE CHRISTIAN'S NEED IN THIS "EVIL DAY"

Thus those who receive the truth in the love of it become students of the Bible. As they study, they learn more and more how each one of the true church is to be sanctified by the truth, that each may be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." They realize that the church is now being called out to be saints of God, to be saparated from the world, and to have a share with the Lord Jesus in blessing and uplifting the whole world in the age to follow this, the Millennial age—now so near at hand. To such the exhortation of the Apostle is, "Add to your faith virtue [fortitude]; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance [self-control, self restraint]; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love [a broad, generous love, taking in the whole world, even our enemies]."—2 Peter 1:5-7.

The Apostle then adds, "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren [inactive, idle] nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." At this juncture the Apostle shows the contrary effect of the spirit of the world upon those who profess to be children of God—the result of a neglect to study and assimilate the Word. He says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." Then he counsels all, "Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—Vs. 8-11.

NEED OF "THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD"

By seeking to know God's will in order to do it, the Lord's people are preparing themselves for the glorious inheritance of the faithful. Fortified by development of character, these will not fall, no matter what the trial that the Lord may permit to come upon them. The Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the church at Ephesus, speaks of some who will be able to stand in the "evil day," and implies that a great many at that time will not be able to stand. He declares that those who hope to stand will need to put on "the whole armor of God." The various pieces of the Christian's armor will then be indispensable, and he intimates that only those fully armored would be ready for the onslaughts of that day.

The Lord did not reveal to the Apostles when the "evil day" would come. They knew that it was then future, but how far into the future they did not know. They did not expect it before their death; for some of them said that they expected to put off the present body, to die, and to awake in the first resurrection, and that they believed the second coming of Christ to be some little time distant. Evidently it was a part of God's plan to keep his people uninformed concerning the exact time of the day of the Lord, until due; but he provided for them that they would be able to stand when the "evil day" arrived, if they would diligently put on the armor.

And now we have come to this "evil day"; and the urgent message to us is: "Put on the whole armor of God!"—prepare yourselves for the great testing that will come, that you may be able to stand! Get ready! Each piece of the armor, each fruit of the Spirit, is a part of the necessary preparation for this "evil day," this "hour of temptation," now present. So these should all be added with great care. Read Ephesians 6:13-18; 2 Peter 1:4-11; Galatians 5:19-26.

WHY THOUSANDS ARE FALLING

This is the time long foretold, when "a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand." Why will all these fall? Because they have neglected this necessary development of character; because they have failed to put on the whole armor of God; because under the delusions of the adversary and the spirit of the world and of Babylon they have become twisted in their minds. They have tried to raise money for the heathen or for building fine church edifices; they have gotten up church fairs and entertainments, etc.; not appreciating the fact that it is necessary to build up their own characters, that character, built up after the instruction of the Word of God, is absolutely necessary to an entrance into the kingdom of Christ. And so these are falling all around us.

If the whole armor of God was important in the Apostle's day, it is still more important today. We need all that is represented in the breastplate of righteousness, in the shield of faith, in the helmet of salvation, the covering of protection for the intellect, in the sandals of Gospel preparation, in the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. We need that our loins be girt up with truth. Thus shall we be enabled to preserve our vital relationship with the Lord and his house and to daily grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"In the last days," said the Apostle, "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Therefore we need to be fully established in the faith, and able to fully trust the Lord. Let us keep the sword of the Spirit sharpened and well in hand, that we may be ready for service in the protection of others and in the defense of ourselves. We need to be continually on the alert respecting our own fleshly weaknesses and besetments, that we may war a successful warfare, and thus share with our Lord his kingdom and crown.

"As I near the time of trouble,
Bid my faith in thee increase:
While the thousands round are falling,
Keep me, keep in perfect peace.
Refuge! Fortress! Thou hast set thy love on me!"

DID JESUS REVILE HIS ENEMIES?

"Who when he was reviled, reviled not again."—1 Peter 2:23.

Naturally the question arises, How shall we harmonize St. Peter's statement in this text with the fact that our Lord denounced the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law as hypocrites, as a generation of vipers, etc?

We recall the evidence presented in the Gospels. St. Peter was one of the twelve Apostles and hence was with our Lord continually during his earthly ministry, and evidently, therefore, a very good witness of the fact that the Master did not return reviling for reviling. The import of the Apostle's words was that Jesus did not retaliate. When evil things were spoken of him, He did not speak evil of those who did him injury. He did not call down curses upon their heads, but committed himself to God and left his cause in the hands of divine justice.

The Evangelists record some of these revilings against our Lord. On one occasion his enemies said of him, "He hath a devil and is mad." Again, Jesus himself implied that he was also called "Beelzebub"—prince of devils. The Scribes and the Pharisees acknowledged his works, but denounced him, and attributed his goods works to Satan. They implied that his birth was illegitimate. They attempted to prove that he was guilty of blasphemy in saying that if the temple were torn down he would erect is again in three days. They did not get the spirit of his teaching, and tried to make out that his statement was sacriligious. They endeavored to entrap him in his words. They held that if he were really a great man, he would fellowship with them and not with publicans and sinners. Finally they reviled him to the extent of crucifying him between two thieves.

But how was it that Jesus said some very sharp things to the Scribes, Pharisees and chief priests of that day? For instance, he called them "a generation of vipers," "whited walls," "sepulchres full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." On one occasion he said, "Ye hypocrites! Ye can discern the face of the sky; but how is it that ye cannot discern the signs of the times?" Again, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna!" He declared, "Ye are of your father the devil, for his works ye do."

At another time he called them, "Ye fools and blind," "Ye blind guides," and denounced them saying, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them who are entering to go in . . . Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of Gehenna than yourselves. . . Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint, anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee! cleanse first the inside of the cup and of the platter, that the outside may be clean also." Were these revilings? Was not St. Peter mistaken when he wrote the words under consideration? Where does the line of difference come in?

JESUS DID NOT STRIKE BACK

We answer. The line of difference is in that our Lord was not striking back at them; his charges against them were made in advance, and were not, therefore, retaliation against something which they had said to him. He did not refer to any one of them as having a devil. He spoke of their system in general as being a pernicious system. If the Lord had not declared that these rulers of Israel were hypocrites, how could we have known that they were hypocrites, when they appeared outwardly very anxious to keep the law? The people said, "See how these holy men go about and pray on the street corners! Look at their broad phylacteries! We do not see Jesus pray half as much as they pray. And they are always watching, watching, to keep the Law." It was therefore right that our Lord should point out that their watchings, their tithings and their long prayers were hypocritical. They were so very careful about tithing the mint and the anise seed, but had no hesitation about devouring widows' houses—by some technicality getting hold of the property of the needy widow and then swallowing it up themselves.

Jesus declared that on the outside these professedly holy men were indeed ever so white and clean and beautiful, but that on the inside they were vile and unclean. They were of their father the devil; for they had his disposition. They did not do good and serve God from purity of heart; theirs was merely an outward service. Their whole system was honeycombed with hypocrisy—in the language of today we would term it "rotten." It was necessary that these men be exposed, and all who were pure of heart be saved from the blight of their influence. Jesus called out no one of them by name, but merely denounced them as a class. He was not seeking to do them injury, but good, if possible, and to warn them and all of the evil of such a course. Our Lord wished to deliver the people; therefore he spoke these things about a class; he said some very evil things about that class. It would be for each one of the class to clear his own skirts and to show that he was not leading a double life. Our Lord's words, then, would not come under the head of evil-speaking. He was speaking about a system. He was not telling something secret about John Smith, or saying that Mrs. Brown was so-and-so, doing thus-and-so in private life, etc.

So we believe that we have a perfect right to call attention to the flagrant errors of today. It would not be right to reprove in the way our Lord did; for people would resent it more now than did the Jews of his day. If our Lord had not rebuked some of these things that their leaders did, the people would not have known but that those Pharisees had the Lord's endorsement. There they were going about with sanctimonious faces and saying so many prayers, etc. Were they really holy people? Jesus was there as a representative of God and exponent of his views. So Jesus let the people know that these Pharisees were not doing the things pleasing to God. He merely did his duty.

CITY OF DAVID—CITY OF GOD

MAY 30.—2 SAMUEL 6:1-19.—PSALM 24.

JERUSALEM THE NEW CAPITAL—KING DAVID'S PALACE—GOD'S PRESENCE DESIRED—THE ARK TO BE BROUGHT—UZZAH SLAIN—OBED-EDOM BLESSED—THE LESSON LEARNED—THE ARK PROPERLY BROUGHT—SOLEMNITY WITH REJOICING—THE TABERNACLE OF GOD—LESSONS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of Jehovah."—Psalm 122:1.

Guided by divine providence, King David sought a new capital after he had been anointed king over all Israel. The city of Jerusalem had for centuries been an impregnable fortress, held by the Jebusites. They claimed that even the blind and the cripples could defend it against any foe, so advantageously was it situated. But when the time came, it was delivered into the hands of King David and became the capital of Israel. One of the first acts of the new king was to provide himself a palace fitting to the dignity of the nation and the court. To this end he obtained from King Hiram of Tyre not only material, but also skilled craftsmen.

Soon King David's spiritual nature, so marked and represented in his Psalms, began to assert itself in respect to the government of Israel. It was not sufficient that idolatry should not be tolerated amongst God's covenant people. The symbols of God's presence should be honored once more. The Tabernacle at Nob had fallen into disuse when King Saul destroyed the priests because they gave comfort to David; and King Saul had had the Tabernacle removed to Gibeon; but the ark was not in the Tabernacle, and had not been for a long time.

We recall that the wicked sons of Eli had taken the ark with them into the battle with the Philistines; that in the defeat it was captured by the Philistines; that in its presence, Dagon, the Philistine idol, fell down broken; and that in whatever city the ark rested, there were chastisements from the Lord until the Philistines returned it to Kirjath-Jearim. There it had remained for seventy years, until the events now noticed. King David made the transfer of the ark to its new tent, or Tabernacle, a very important affair, sending word to various parts of the nation, assembling some thirty thousand warriors and multitudes of people of deep religious inclination who desired to be witnesses to this great new religious movement, which all hoped would mean the bringing of God's blessing back to the nation, as of old.

A GREAT LESSON IN REVERENCE

King David, intent upon honoring God, had nevertheless neglected to look particularly into the divine law regulating the ark and its movement—who should touch it, etc. Divine providence now gave him a great lesson in respect to reverence for the Almighty and carefulness in respect to the laws. He had esteemed the ark, but not highly enough. Really, it was the most important of all the various furniture of the Tabernacle.

The brazen altar and the laver were in the Court; the table of shew-bread, which was overlaid with gold, the golden candlestick and the golden altar of incense were in the Holy. But in the Most Holy the only article of furniture was the ark. In shape it was like a box—about four feet long, two feet high, and two feet wide. It had a pole at each side, by which the Levites were to bear it on their shoulders. It was overlaid with gold; and inside the box were the tables of the law, a golden pot of manna, preserved from the Wilderness times, and Aaron's rod, by which miracles had been wrought. The top of the ark was its most peculiar feature. It was a solid plate of gold, wrought out above in the shape of two cherubim, whose faces looked inward and whose wings stretched forward.

The divine direction was that the priests should cover the ark in a particular manner, symbolical of certain things; and that then only the Levites should have the care of it, to bear it upon their shoulders. Neglecting these matters, the king had a new cart made and oxen to draw the cart, as though this would be a more dignified way to bring it than any other thought of. But it was not God's way; and a lesson of reverence for God and for the ark, which symbolized his character and his mercy-seat, must be given.

The appropriate time came when the oxen, drawing the cart over a smooth, sloping, stone surface, allowed it to tilt a little. Then it was that Uzzah stretched forth his hand to steady the ark, and was immediately smitten dead with a bolt of lightning. This evidence of divine displeasure with the procedure brought all the festivities to a sudden termination; and King David feared to bring it too near to him, lest it should do other injury. The procession stopped; turning aside, the ark was delivered to the home of Obed-edom the Levite, possibly a priest.

The whole people thus learned the lesson of reverence—

a lesson, by the way, which seems to be as much needed today as at any time. Irreverence is frequently manifested by the world; but this does not astound us as much as when we find irreverence manifested by those who profess to be the Lord's consecrated people, his royal priesthood. It is sometimes irreverence of manner, sometimes irreverence of language, sometimes the making of jokes on religious things or on passages of Scripture. Everything of the kind is surely injurious to the individual, as well as to his influence with others.

We are not to forget that Uzzah was not sent to eternal torment; but that he merely fell asleep in death, and that his mistake, which taught a good lesson in his time, will not inure to his disadvantage in the future. Meantime, another lesson was taught; for the ark at the home of Obed-edom began to bring blessings, of just what character we are not informed, but blessings of such a nature that they attracted the attention of many. Among them King David noticed. Again his heart turned to the original thought that Jerusalem should be not only the City of David, but the City of God, God's dwelling-place, as represented by the presence of the ark and the Shekinah glory-light which shone between the two cherubim, as indicating the presence of God with his people, Israel.

GOD'S OWN HOLY NATION

We are not situated in the same way as were David and the Israelites. There is no nation in the world today that is God's kingdom. When he took away the crown from Zedekiah, 606 B. C., He declared through the Prophet, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it unto him." (Ezekiel 21:-25-27) We believe that the time for the giving of the kingdom to Messiah and the fulfilment of our prayers, "Thy kingdom come," is near at hand. But, in the meantime, no earthly kingdom is God's kingdom except in the sense that St. Peter declares the church to be the holy nation, a peculiar people of God. (1 Peter 2:9) But even then, it is not a sectarian system that is referred to—not the Baptist church, nor the Methodists, nor the Presbyterian, nor the Lutheran, the Anglican or the Roman. The true church of Christ is the unlimited church, to which properly belongs the name Catholic, in the sense that it is general; for that word means general, or universal.

The church of Christ is the one church throughout the whole world; and its members are those who are united to Christ by consecration and by divine acceptance through the begetting of the holy Spirit. Some of its members may be found in the Roman church, some in the Anglican, some in the Presbyterian, some in the Baptist, some in the Lutheran, some in the Methodist and others, and some outside of all these. But this is the only holy nation that God recognizes; and it will not be organized as a new nation fully until the resurrection change shall glorify the Lord's people with himself beyond the veil; as it is written, we shall be like him, shall see him as he is and shall share his glory.

We can no more expect the world to appreciate the truth of God and the presence of God than the Israelites could have expected that the Philistines, on the one hand, and the Moabites, on the other hand, would accept the Lord. Only God's covenant people can appreciate him and his arrangements. He is in their midst only.

Nor can we even claim that it is a family matter; rather, as the Scriptures show, it is an individual matter. Here one, there another, the church of Christ is scattered throughout the world. Only the consecrated belong to it or have its privileges and the fellowship with the Father and with the Son which the ark of the covenant would imply. One exception to this rule might be noted; namely, the one mentioned by St. Paul—the children of believing parents, who are counted in with their parents as participators in God's favors, blessings and care until such time as they reach a development of mind that would enable them to decide for themselves, either to make a full consecration to the Lord and be individually accepted by him through the begetting of the holy Spirit; or to turn aside and be part of the world.

When King David was ready for the bringing up of the ark the second time, some three months after the first attempt, which failed, he had studied the matter more carefully; and this time there was no new cart, but the divinely directed method—the Levites bearing the Ark upon their shoulders. It is not for us to be ingenious and inventive in respect to divine methods and services, but rather to be students of the divine will, searching the Scriptures that we may know the will of God and do it. The lesson which King David learned is one which all of God's people may well take to heart.

DANCING BEFORE THE LORD

The Record tells that, besides the thousands of warriors who acted as a guard and gave dignity to the procession, and the multitudes of people who met the ark at various villages on the way, there were trumpeters, rattlers, and players on stringed instruments, who made joyful manifestations of appreciation of the great event of God's return to the nation as represented in the ark's return. Another arrangement was that of having the Levites chant, one to the other, the different portions of a certain Psalm which King David had composed for this very occasion. It is made a part of this lesson.—Psalm 24.

King David joined with the others in his manifestation of delight, and danced before the Lord. It would appear that this custom of a dignified rhythmic moving of the feet in harmony with music is a common form even today in far Eastern countries. Mr. Clark tells us how there was such a dance at a gathering of the Christian Endeavorers at one of their meetings in India, and how dignified and beautiful it appeared.

As the grand procession neared the city of Jerusalem, it was met by the women of the city with rejoicing. At the head of these should have been Michal, King David's wife, the daughter of King Saul. But not so. She was in a cynical, proud mood. Was she not the daughter of King Saul? Had not her husband David been a poor shepherd boy, and then an outlaw for a time? On his coming home she criticized him for his manifestations of joy in connection with the bringing in of the ark. She said that it was undignified and reproved him. King David reminded her that the Lord had taken the kingdom from her father and given it to him, and that he thus had the Lord's favor and thus relied on him. And the proud woman was apparently thereafter left to herself, the bare mention being made that she was thenceforth childless.

THE PSALM WAS PROPHETIC

As the ark represented Christ, in whom are hidden all the wisdom and power of God and in whom center all of God's blessings for men, so the bringing of the ark into the city corresponded in a measure to our receiving of Christ. All such realize that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof"—that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father and through the Son. The world and all that dwell therein are subjects of these blessings.

God is founding his new order of things in the midst of seas of discontent—amongst those who are not established and in harmony with God—the restless masses. He invites us to ascend into his holy hill, his holy kingdom, and to be established in his holy place, in the spiritual divine nature. He stipulates that none can be of this class except upon certain conditions; namely, a pure heart, an honest heart, and clean hands, righteous living to the best of his ability. These are all expected to swear allegiance to God. This is styled their covenant with him.

Jesus was the first of these covenanters; and all of the church must walk in his steps, if they would be with him in his holy kingdom. These must not lift up their soul to falsehood nor swear deceitfully. God will require of them all that they have covenanted with him. Only such will receive the blessing of the Lord, and only to such will his righteousness be imputed through Christ.

Never more than today has this lesson seemed to need to be impressed. How many today confess that although they have made a covenant of sacrifice and vowed to the Lord, they are not considering this nor keeping their vows! How many indeed confess that they are speaking falsely in respect to their creeds, denying privately what they publicly have declared to be their faith! Surely such a course must be reprehensible in God's sight and such cannot hope to be of the kingdom.

Then follows in the Psalm a declaration that the Children of Israel are those who seek the Lord, and who request that the King of Glory come in, even the Lord, mighty, powerful, able to deliver from sin and from the power of sin—death. We are still waiting for the entrance of this King of Glory in the full sense of the word. He declares that he will be revealed in flaming fire, so far as the world is concerned—a great "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1) Many Bible students see this trouble already beginning in the awful war now spreading, and are expecting the fiery anarchy of it to result in the near future. Then quickly will come the still small voice, the divine influence, the mighty power of the Savior, which will deliver from sin, from death, and from Satan, who shall be bound for a thousand years.

"IN PASTURES GREEN?"

[Reprint of poem published in issue of June 1, 1913, which please see.]

"THOU ART THE MAN!"

JUNE 6.—2 SAMUEL 11:1 TO 12:7.

THE HONESTY OF THE BIBLE—KING DAVID'S STATION DID NOT COVER HIS GUILT—THE TEMPTATIONS OF PROSPERITY—KING DAVID'S TERRIBLE SINS—THE PROPHET NATHAN'S PARABLE—THE KING'S SENSE OF JUSTICE—CONDEMNED BY HIS OWN WORD—HIS PENITENCE—FORGIVEN YET PUNISHED—THE LESSON TO ALL.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God."—Psalm 51:10.

The Bible is unlike any other book in the world. It is the most honest, the most candid, of all books. The one most approved as a man after God's own heart is, when he sins, most severely condemned and heavily punished. There is a lesson, however, in the Scriptural statement, "There is forgivness with thee, that thou mightest be feared." (Psalm 130:4) The fact that he gives us credit for our heart intentions, even when the weaknesses of the flesh are reproved and punished—these indications of consideration prompt to the greater reverence for God than if we merely thought of him as merciless.

No wonder we are surprised that one who manifested so many noble traits should also have manifested such weaknesses as those condemned in this lesson—adultery and murder! We think of David the youth, his reverence for God, his faith, his loyalty, his trials, his difficulties; and we wonder how he could become so changed in so short a time. The secret is not far to seek. It is easier to live a wholly consecrated life in poverty than when surrounded by wealth and the pleasures, customs and liberties of the court. The king temporarily forgot that the ark, representative of God's favor and presence, was now in his city. He realized indeed that the eyes of the Lord were in every place beholding the evil and the good; yet the seeing of the Tabernacle should have brought freshly to his mind the thought, "Thou God seest me."

We may be sure, however, that King David did not get into so sinful a condition of mind and heart suddenly. The narrative shows that the matter must have gone on for months, gradually reaching a culmination. Nor would it be fair to the king to assume that his heart was as wrong as his conduct. Rather we must assume, from subsequent manifestations, that his heart was still loyal to God and to the principles of righteousness, but somehow his heart had gone to sleep and his flesh had become very much alive. He was awake to sin, asleep to righteousness. He had before him the unfavorable examples of other kings and the liberties which they exercised. His relationship with God had made him keen of intellect; and now, in yielding to temptation, this keenness of mind was all the more effective in the evil course.

A COURAGEOUS SERVANT OF GOD

David first coveted his neighbor's wife. He did not rebuke this sinful condition of mind, but allowed it to proceed until he stole his neighbor's wife. Her husband was in the war, a faithful soldier. The emergency seemed to call for his death in order to protect the king from shame. David's conscience was surely asleep when he ordered his general to put the faithful soldier in an exposed place in the attack being made on a certain city, then to command a retreat and thus leave the most exposed ones to be killed.

The plan carried out. It cost the life of not only the defrauded husband, but several others. We can scarcely imagine how one of King David's loyalty to principle could have arranged such a plan or how he could have had any peace under these circumstances. Surely none of his beautiful Psalms were wrtten during those nine months or more. But Uriah was dead; and his stolen wife had been made the wife of David, and shortly their child was born.

Then appeared the Prophet Nathan before the king. Wisely bringing his reproof in the form of a parable, he told of a poor man who had but one ewe lamb and of how a wealthy neighbor had defruaded him of it. King David's sense of justice was outraged, and he declared that the man who did that deed must restore four-fold and must also be put to death. Then the Lord's Prophet Nathan pointing to the king, declared, "Thou art the man!" and promptly drove home the lesson. It required courage; but whoever has a message from the Lord must needs have the courage to deliver it—as wisely as possible, of course, but faithfully.

Instantly King David's heart was aroused; immediately his conscience was quickened. He saw his own conduct, not from the standpoint of other kings and what they did, but from the standpoint of the divine law of righteousness, truth, kindness, mercy. He beheld himself a sinner. Indeed, under the law, both the adultery and the murder were punishable by death. The king instantly acknowledged his sin, and prayed, fasted and mourned. Meanwhile the Prophet, by divine direction, informed the king that for all this the Lord would not cause his death nor take from him all his loving-kindness, because he had confessed and repented; but that, nevertheless, the child of his sin should not live and the king himself would in after time suffer severe punishments for his transgressions.

Here we perceive a principle of the divine government in respect to those who are the people of God and are in covenant relationship with him. Justice would have been required in respect to the sins; but to the repentant soul the Lord's favor would, nevertheless, still be granted. Many Christians have had experience along this line. God does not continue to treat them as sinners; but, accepting their heart contrition, he forgives them in that sense of the word; yet true to his arrangement, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." In this divine arrangement there is nothing to encourage sin, but, on the contrary, everything to encourage righteousness; and if sin be fallen into, everything to encourage the sinner to accept divine forgiveness and to reform his life, even though he shall be obliged to bear some severe penalty—perhaps to his tomb.

THE PSALM OF REPENTANCE

Very many Christians have been encouraged to repentance by the Fifty-first Psalm. Surely none have been encouraged by it to sin. It is said that Voltaire, the infidel, once attempted a burlesque of this Psalm, but became so awed by its solemn tone that he threw down the pen and fell back dazed on his couch, full of remorse. Bishop Hall, commenting, says, "How can we presume of not sinning, or despair for sinning, when we find so great a saint thus fallen, thus risen?" We should remember, however, that noble as King David was, he was not a saint in the New Testament sense of that word. He may have been equally saintly in heart intentions, but he had not been accepted of the Lord and begotten of the holy Spirit; for "the holy Spirit was not yet given," as we read in John 7:39.

The giving of the holy Spirit and its begetting to a new nature began at Pentecost, and has continued since. If we are astonished that King David should be overtaken in such faults, how much more would we be astonished if any saint of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, should fall into such a trap of the adversary. The spirit-begotten ones have much advantage every way—not only through the greater enlightenment which comes to them through the better knowledge of the divine character, the divine plan and the divine promises, but also by reason of having the Lord Jesus as their helper under the assurance that "All things shall work together for good to them" (Romans 8:28); and that the Lord will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able; but will with every temptation also provide a way of escape.—I Corinthians 10:13.

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me." These words of honesty assure us that the king was overtaken in some king of fog which for months obscured his mental vision. Earth-born clouds and fleshly weaknesses arose like a veil between his soul and the Lord, shutting out the light of the Lord's countenance.

The lesson applies to all who have ever been in covenant relationship with God. The poet has expressed what ought to be the sentiment of every Christian, discerning the slightest shadow between the Lord and himself.

"Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
I know no night when thou art near.
Oh, may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes!"

The important lesson here is that we shall keep close accounts with God. No child of God should go forth in the morning without an earnest petition to him for divine supervision of his affairs and for help to walk the right path. No child of God should retire at night without a retrospective glance on all the day's pathway, to discern to what extent it has been a profitable one and has brought him a day's march nearer the heavenly home. Or, perchance something has occurred of which he should feel ashamed, it is none too soon to go at once to the throne of heavenly grace to obtain mercy and find fresh help for future times of need.

The child of God thus keeping daily accounts with the Father and with the Redeemer, will abide in Their love and not be in danger of falling into any such great sin as these noted in this lesson. Even King David, we may be sure, would have fallen into no such sins had he not allowed gradually to arise earth-born clouds of fleshly hues between the Lord and himself.

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

Although the holy Spirit was not given to the ancient worthies in the same sense that it is given to the church, it was nevertheless the manifestation of God's favor toward them in their affairs, as the king here intimates. We are to remember that from Moses down to John the Baptist, according to the Scriptures, there was a house of servants under Moses; but that during this Gospel age there is a house of sons, begotten of the holy Spirit, under the chief Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.—Hebrews 3:5, 6.

CO-LABORING WITH OUR GOD

Too often do God's people forget that the Lord himself is at the head of his work. Too often the thought is, We will do a work and get God to co-labor with us in our work. Let us get the right focus on the matter, and perceive that God has purposed and is carrying out a great work; and that it will succeed, entire regardless of us and our effort; and that it is a great privilege granted to the people of God to co-labor with their Maker in the carrying out of his plans, his designs, his arrangements, in his way. Viewing matters from this standpoint, our prayer and our watching should be with a view to knowing and doing the will of the Lord, content whatever lot we see, since 'tis our God who leads us.

This is the program which the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY has sought to follow. Its officers are seeking to do the will of the Father as guided by the teachings of the Head of the church, Christ Jesus and his appointed representatives, the twelve apostles, whose words we have for our instruction today in better form than ever before. Following this program, our Society has not sought to lay up earthly riches, but has been, rather a spending institution. Whatever God's providence sent in to us without solicitation we have sought to spend as wisely as possible in harmony with the Word and Spirit of the Lord. Long ago we announced that when the funds would cease, the activities of the Society would cease proportionately; and that as the funds increased, the Society's activities would be enlarged.

This program has been greatly blessed of the Lord and, we believe, is in full accord with his will. We have no thought of changing it in any degree. Last year was the most wonderful one in our experience. The Gospel message by printed page and orally and by the DRAMA witnessed the Gospel of the kingdom nigh at hand to millions of people all over the earth. We thank God for the blessed privileges enjoyed and the activities permitted in his service on behalf of thousands of his consecrated people in every land, co-laboring with the Society and laboring either directly or indirectly under its auspices.

When making our last Annual Report, we expressed the thought that many of the Lord's people have already invested what money they possessed, and that we would thus expect donations to be smaller than heretofore and that we would be obliged to discontinue some of the DRAMAS. Later we announced bright prospects of a full resumption. We did not tell the basis of this expectation, but will now explain:

Some Brethren informed us that they believed they were possessed of a rich gold-bearing property, that all of its proceeds were consecrated to the Lord's service, that ere long we might expect money from them in good supply, but that their names were to be kept secret. Their expectations, which were highly appreciated, were not realized. The expectation had a beneficial effect, however, in that it encouraged us to keep the work up to a high notch of speed and efficiency in every direction until the present time. Now we have gone our limit. We must conclude that it is the Lord's will that our activities be greatly curtailed, in order to bring down the expenses to a parity with the income.

SEVENTY SENT FORTH

In line with this decision, seventy of the dear helpers at the Society's headquarters have been obliged to go forth to seek other avenues of usefulness in the work. Some will become colporteurs; others will accept situations as teachers in schools and colleges; some will enter business life. All will, we believe, however, still continue to put God first and to consider the spread of the Gospel of the kingdom their main business of life, giving evenings, Sundays, etc., to the service, as may be possible.

The necessary retrenchments include the putting of the DRAMAS on a self-supporting basis—or else discontinuing them. Our Society can continue to supply films and slides for these DRAMAS, and the Office direction, but must look to the superintendents and operators of each DRAMA to meet their own expenses. This is being done by offering the DRAMA to theatre managers as part of their regular program, to be charged for, but not at an extra charge. The new plan is being put into operation and is proving successful generally. Indeed, some people declare that they would much prefer to pay an admission fee than to attend the DRAMA free, because they feared that at a free entertainment they would be brought in contact with the rude and uncleanly. It is a remarkable fact, however, that our free entertainments have been generally attended by a splendid class of people from the middle walks of life. Furthermore, to adapt the DRAMA to the use of the theatre managers we have arranged that the FOUR PARTS can be given in full as now, two hours each; or, if the theatre managers prefer, we will supply the four entertainments of about one hour each by omitting some of the slides and lectures, leaving the audience to get the remainder of the DRAMA by the reading of the Scenario. It may be that in this way the Lord will use the DRAMA in reaching a still different class from that already reached by its free exhibition.

The free volunteer matter, which last year ran up to the enormous amount of forty-seven millions of copies, must also be cut down. Some of our readers have orders placed; and this will be the explanation if your orders are not filled entirely. In a word, the retrenchment will extend all along the line, including a reduction in the expense allowances of the Bethel family and curtailment of expense for food supplies. Our readers will be glad to know that the entire family is rejoicing in the privilege of further self-denials for the cause we love to serve, and that the seventy who have gone forth, some of them with tears, also manifest fullest resignation to the divine will, rejoicing in the various steps of divine providence and continuing steadfast in prayer, faith and love toward the Lord and the brethren. All are seeking to receive the experiences of life as the polishing preparatory for the kingdom. So receiving them, the blessing of the Lord is more and more manifest amongst us.

We have made this statement with greater detail than might seem necessary, lest there should be wrong impressions and misunderstandings of any kind.

OUR GENERAL LETTER

To Seventy Brothers and Sisters of the Bethel Family:

Greetings!

Sorrow mingles with our joy to do the Father's will and to follow the guidance of his providence, because it signifies a temporary parting from so considerable a number of those whom we dearly love and whose association with the work we highly prize. At the opening of the year we thought that we saw a bright ray of financial hope, notwithstanding the fact that the dear friends throughout the world who had been contributing to the Tract Fund to support the work had well drained themselves of means and could not be expected to continue their donations as formerly. Month by month we have waited and maintained the work, expecting some realization of our hopes; but after five months the drain is so heavy that prompt action is necessary. We must not involve ourselves in debt nor jeopardize the work in general; hence the decision for the reduction of the expenses along every line, including the home expenses, office expenses, etc.

Financially we know that some of you will be benefited by the change. We can surmise also that some will experience benefit to their health by a change of employment. We assume that some of you thus leaving the Bethel and the Tabernacle will be entering the colporteur work. The weather is delightful now, and in places where money is not too scarce good success is obtainable.

In any event, dear Brethren and Sisters, we commend you to the Lord and to his watch-care, blessing and guidance, assured that all things are working together for good to those that love him. He may have some new experiences for us—trials and blessings. He may have some new opportunities for us and may guide us in the reaching of others in this gleaning time. We assure you that we are loth to part with you and that, should the financial stringency be relieved, it will be our pleasure to again expand the work, according to the leading of the Lord's providence.

So far as possible, we would like this retrenchment to take place at once—before the middle of this month, or at least be-

fore the first of June. We ask your hearty and cordial co-operation, and request that you remember in prayer those who are charged with the responsibilities of the Society's work, that wisdom and grace may be theirs in abundance.

While we have suggested that the work may a little later on be expanded, we should also add that it may quite as probably be still further contracted to effect a further reduction in the general expenses. Whatever is the Lord's will surely is our will. Let us show him our faith, our confidence, our loyalty and our obedience.

The selection of names of those who might be spared from the work was no easy task to the heads of the departments charged with this responsibility. Like all human work it may be imperfect; but we are sure that it is done with an eye single to the Lord's pleasement, and we trust that he will overrule it to his praise and for the good of all concerned.

With much Christian love,

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

C. T. RUSSELL.

LOVING RESPONSE

To Our Beloved Pastor, from the Departing Seventy Members of "The Bethel Family":

As we go forth from the hallowed precincts of the "Bethel Home"—hallowed by the remembrance of the many seasons of sweet communion with those whom the Heavenly Father has specially honored in placing in the fore-front of his mighty work in these closing days of this present world's history—it is with a feeling of joy and thankfulness for the many blessings and privileges which have been ours as members of the "Bethel Family."

As we reflect upon the Lord's abounding grace so freely and richly bestowed upon us as members of this household, and as we face the future with its prospects of Heavenly honors and glories, awaiting us—those who shall be accounted "conquerors, and more than conquerors"—there is, nevertheless, a tinge of sadness in parting with many loved ones, and in leaving all we have called "Home."

Ah, well! we shall remember the kind and loving ministrations of yourself, dear Brother Russell, in the days to come, when separated from one another, we shall fight on in the good fight of faith.

It is the prayer of our hearts that the splendid example of Christian fortitude and self-sacrificing devotion in the service of the Lord, the truth, and the brethren that you have shown, may ever be a cherished and shining image upon memory's scroll.

If ever a true and devoted servant of the Lord should be loved and honored for his work's sake, we believe it is yourself. When we think of the days and night of years of toil, and pain, and weariness; and of the grandeur and world-wide scope of your services; how can we help but love and honor you!

We give thanks to our heavenly Father for having raised up one who has been so wise and faithful in ministering to the household of faith and to us in particular who have been of the "Bethel" household.

And now, our dear Pastor, with these expressions of love and appreciation, we go forth with the prayer for divine guidance upon you, and upon our way that in the Lord's appointed time our journey's end shall be the Father's house of many mansions—the heavenly Bethel—prepared for the bride, the Lamb's wife.

God bless you and the dear remaining members of the "Bethel Family"!

Signed, C. J. Woodworth, F. F. Cook, R. G. Jolly and the others.

INTERESTING QUESTION

"HE WENT TO HIS OWN PLACE"

Question.—I notice an article in THE WATCH TOWER which says that Judas died the second death. Can a man die the second death until he has passed from death unto life, until he has been spirit-begotten, until he has once been in Christ Jesus and free from condemnation?

Answer.—Judas and all the other apostles occupied a peculiar place or position, different from other Jews of their time, because they were in contact with our Lord Jesus, the Great Light. They saw that Light, and were responsible in proportion as they saw it. For any of them to sin as Judas did against that Light, would be a very reprehensible thing. True, Judas had not been begotten again of the holy Spirit; for spirit-begetting was not possible until Pentecost. But this does not prove that he could not die the second death. On the contrary, we know that during the Millennial age there will be some who will not receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, but who will die the second death—the death that will be destruction. Their responsibility will lie in the fact that they will be brought to a knowledge of the truth, with the opportunities which it will give them of coming into full harmony with the Lord. If they respond to those opportunities, they may attain everlasting life; if they do not respond, they will die the second death.

Such an opportunity was given to Judas. For a long time he responded favorably; but afterwards he rejected the bless ings that were his portion, and ignominously proved himself a traitor to the one who was his benefactor. Jesus was to be the judge in the matter; and we have his words calling Judas the "son of perdition." (John 17:12) He said that it would have been better for that man if he had never been born. (Matthew 26:24) This would not be true if Judas were to have an opportunity during the Millennial age. The Scriptures say that he went to his own place. (Acts 1:25) His own place was not heaven; for it was not open to anybody yet; his own place was not restitution, for that has not yet come. His own place was the only place then open—the second death.

PRESENT STANDING OF THE CHURCH

The ransom-price, the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, has not yet even been paid over, or applied, for the whole world of mankind. If it were, the whole world, redeemed by that payment, would be in his hands. The world has not yet been in our Lord's hands. The time, however, we believe is near when through the strength of that sacrifice, he will ask the Father, and the Father will give him "the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." (Psalm 2:8) That will be the time when he shall have paid over the ransom-price. He laid down the ransom-price when he died, but did not apply it. The world is still under condemnation. Only the church has escaped that condemnation thus far.

The church escapes from that condition of condemnation by the imputation of the benefits of that ransom which is not yet paid over. If the church could have the merit of Christ imputed to her down through the Gospel age since Pentecost, the same merit, we believe, could be imputed before Pentecost; for our Lord had made the consecration of himself, and, so far as the type goes, he had already slain the bullock. That is, the consecration of our Lord at Jordan represented the killing of the bullock in the Atonement day type; it was the giving up of his earthly life. This was done when he was thirty years of age, before he had called these disciples. It was then that the Father recognized and accepted his sacrifice, for he gave our Lord the begetting of the holy Spirit. If that sacrifice had not been accepted then the Father would not have begotten him of the Spirit.

THE APOSTLES' STANDING DURING OUR LORD'S MINISTRY

The holy Spirit was given as an evidence that what Jesus had given to the Father was accepted. What he did at Calvary was merely the finishing of that work which he began at Jordan. Our Lord treats the matter from this standpoint, and in discoursing with his disciples tells them that they might pray to God as their Father. No Jew had ever done this before. The Jews thought that Jesus' claim to be the Son of God was blasphemy, and took up stones to stone him because of this. (John 10:31-33) Whoever said, "Our Father," was making himself to be a son of God. No Jew, so far as we have any record throughout the Scriptures, ever made use of such expressions; they were a house of servants.

Then again, Jesus addressed his followers, his disciples, as though they had been accepted of the Father. He was the Father's agent, and he received them in harmony with the Father's arrangement. He declared that "No man cometh unto me except the Father draw him"; and, "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." He made these statements before they had received the holy Spirit at Pentecost. This was treating them as though they had the full initiation into the divine family. Our Lord declared that "he that believeth in me hath everlasting life." (John 6:47) All these disciples had believed on the Son. As long as they would hold him in the Scriptural manner—hold to him by faith, according to the terms of this Gospel age, faith and consecration—they might count that they had the life promised to his faithful followers. If any would abandon him, as Judas did, of course he would pass back again from the imputed life to the death condition.

REJECTION OF KNOWLEDGE A SERIOUS MATTER

Judas was a new creature in the reckoned, or imputed,

sense of the word in which all the disciples were said to have passed from death unto life. It was to the new life that they had passed, not to restitution life; for the Lord said to these same disciples that they who had followed him would sit upon twelve thrones (Matthew 19:28), thereby implying that they had passed to that life which would be the condition of the enthroned. Speaking of them, then, from the standpoint of the new creation, this was possible because in our Lord's contract unto death, which he entered into by baptism, he really gave up all of his earthly rights. It was possible in the tentative form, the Father purposing that not many days after Jesus' ascension they would be endued with power from on High.—Luke 24:49.

Hebrews 6:4-8 does indeed refer to the church, but it does not enumerate the only conditions of which any will die the second death. All of the church are liable to this condemnation. If they would sin wilfully, if they would fall away so as to deny the very foundation of God's favor—the ransom-sacrifice of Jesus—they would die the second death. This Scripture does not say that there are no other conditions on which the second death will be inflicted. We see that the second death will be inflicted on some in the Millennial age.

"CONSIDER HIM"—THEN FOLLOW

"Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."—Hebrews 12:3.

The Apostle had just been pointing out the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus. He had reminded the church of the shame and ignominy which the Master had endured for the great joy set before him by the Heavenly Father. He declares Jesus to be the Author and Finisher of our faith. He then urges that in our trials and difficulties as children of God we remember what extreme experiences in suffering the Master endured—such contradiction, such opposition, of sinners against himself—opposition to his doctrines, to everything that he did. This opposition to Jesus continued until it resulted in his murder.

The Apostle says to the church, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin," as Jesus did. As a matter of fact, we really suffer very little and give up very little. At most we have but little life, as members of the fallen race, and it stretches out for only a brief span. We have very little to consecrate to God. And when that little is going we should consider how insignificant it is, and what great things the Master had—not merely the perfection that he had in his earthly life, but also what he had previously, and how, in obedience to the divine will, he humbled himself and left his glory to become a man—and then humbled himself still further, unto death, "even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted [raised to the highest position—Strong] him, and given him a name which is above every name."

We should be glad to walk in his footsteps, to endure the same experiences, to drink whatever the Father shall pour out for us in our cup—his cup. As we consider thus our dear Master's experiences and faithfulness, it makes our experiences seem only light afflictions, but for a moment, and working out "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:17, 18) For let us remember that we are "called . . . to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast."—2 Thessalonians 2:14, 15.

THE RUTHERFORD-TROY DEBATE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

The debates are past history now—ending last evening. Every night the auditorium was packed, with probably more turned away than got in. The total attendance was approximately 12,000 persons. Except for the great amount of enthusiasm manifested by the audience everything was very orderly, and a good spirit prevailed throughout. Certainly the Lord's favor was with us, and the prayers of the many friends were answered. Many messages of encouragement came from different parts of the country, among them two cablegrams from Europe. The friends are all happy. This morning (Sunday) I spoke to the friends for 30 minutes at The Temple, and this was followed by a testimony meeting for one hour. It would have done your heart good to see the joy manifested by the friends, and to hear the many expressions of love for all. If the debates have accomplished no other good, I feel sure they have greatly strengthened the saints here, many testifying that the striking contrast between truth and error has given them new zeal for service.

I must tell you how the adversary did not succeed for once. My opponent was well prepared to assault you personally. I judged so from the interviews he had given the press two days before the debate. I said nothing then, but waited my time. About three minutes before we went on the platform for the first night's discussion I called Brother Troy, my opponent, and two of his friends and two of our friends into a side room. You will recall that we had entered into a thousand-dollar obligation, with securities, that we would refrain from personalities. I then said: "Brother Troy, I desire to be absolutely frank with you and therefore I say this to you before we go on the platform. From your interviews with the press I judge that you intend to assault Pastor Russell from the platform. Of course, you can pursue that course if you wish, but the first time you attempt it I am going to have your bond forfeited."

His reply was, "May I not mention his name?" "No," I said, "not one time. I signed this agreement with you to discuss the Bible, and by that contract I am going to abide, and I shall expect you to do the same." He said, "All right; I am ready." We went on the platform. Not once did he mention your name throughout the four nights, but it was an awfully bitter pill for him to refrain therefrom. Having prepared along that line and being taken down so suddenly he was much disturbed and labored under much stress, as I could observe, during his first argument. I am confident the Lord directed this matter, and thus saved the debate from being an occasion for personal assault upon you.

When the debate closed last night many persons came to me, quite a number saying, "I have been a Baptist for years, but I have had my eyes opened here. You have brought me the light"; and similar expressions.

Quite a large number of cards were turned in on each night. I have not the total here just now. I received a real blessing in the whole matter and am indeed grateful to the Lord that he has been pleased to give me this opportunity to bear witness to his great plan.

This (Sunday) afternoon at the Shrine Auditorium we had a very good public meeting. The friends say there were about 3500 in attendance, 992 of whom turned in their addresses. This afternoon my subject was, "Babylon Before the Great Court"; and I took occasion to tell the people about the assaults the ministers were making against you personally. Several preachers were in the audience, and I stated that I would be glad to furnish a printed reply to each one of such charges. Sorry we did not have the booklet ready, but we will get it to many here when it does arrive. I hope that by the time you come the people will be more anxious to hear you than ever before. I think there are still some of the Lord's people in this place.

I must take this occasion to say that the success of the publicity for the debates and meetings following here is due to the untiring and faithful work of our dear Brother Page Noll. He made himself very agreeable to the reporters "covering" the debates, and they were favorable to us in every way they could be. A full report of each day's debate was published by the *Express* and the *Tribune*, and I am advised that about 75,000 extra copies were mailed out each day by the newspaper company to various parts of the world. The paper printed cards and distributed them all over the city, calling the attention of the people to the fact that verbatim copies of the debate would be in certain issues of the paper; and doubtless this sold many papers. Brother Noll had gone after the matter in a systematic manner, and the Lord surely blessed his efforts and his faithfulness. If a copy of the debates comes to your notice you will see that more space is given to my argument than to my opponent's. That is due to the fact that I spoke with much more rapidity than did my opponent. Profiting by your experience at Cincinnati, I crowded in all that I could.

I enclose a clipping from one of the morning papers, wherein you will see that at yesterday's meeting I spoke of the booklet I am getting out answering the slanderous charges against you. Quite a number are anxious to have these pamphlets, and I hope they may be ready soon.

Never before have I realized so fully the blessed privilege the Lord's dear children have of praying for each other. I am

sure that the prayers of the dear friends throughout the world had much to do with the success of these debates. I wish I might express to every one of our brethren my great appreciation of their fervent prayers on my behalf. Hourly I felt that these were a strength to me. I shall never be able to thank you as I would like for the letter which was signed by yourself and all the Bethel family, assuring me of your united and continued prayers in my behalf. The Lord reward all of you. This is but a reminder of the unity of the body and the sweet relationship we are privileged to enjoy here. How much sweeter it will be in the kingdom! Brother Woodworth suggested that there must be great interest in heaven in this debate. The Lord be praised for it all. I am thankful indeed that he was pleased to use me to glorify his dear name in any manner. Brothers Woodworth and MacMillan sat with me on the platform as counsel, and my son was by my side to take anything quickly that I desired and to prepare the copy for me without delay. All rendered valuable service. The Lord arranged it all. There was never a moment after the debate began that we did not have the sympathy of a majority of the great audience; and when the debate concluded, there could be no doubt about the fact that a large majority of the audience was with us.

My room in this hotel looks out facing the main entrance to Trinity Auditorium, and each evening I could see the crowds gather. For more than two hours before the debate began the people were standing at the door waiting to get in. Each evening the gates were closed and locked by 7 o'clock, and after that hundreds were turned away. It is estimated that from 10,000 to 15,000 persons were turned away during the four nights, unable to gain entrance. Over the entrance to the Trinity Auditorium appear these words cut in the stone: "The Gates Shall Never Be Closed"; but they had to close for the four sessions of the debate.

Please express my love to all the dear Bethel family, reserving a large portion for yourself. Please continue to remember me at the throne of heavenly grace.

Yours in the service of the dear Redeemer,

J. F. RUTHERFORD.

* * *

[We rejoice greatly that the blessing of the Lord was so richly with our dear Brother Rutherford on the occasion of the debates referred to above. Apparently the Lord guided these debates and blessed the outcome. However, we still feel a prejudice against public debates of religious questions, and have elsewhere expressed our reasons.]

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DEBATES

Although the Lord's providence did seem to open up the way for the "Eaton-Russell Debate" and later, for the "White-Russell Debate," and through these Debates led the way on to the publication of the Sermons in hundreds of newspapers throughout the world, nevertheless the Editor is not and never was, much of a believer in the advantages of debating. The Debates mentioned were valuable chiefly as entering-wedges for the newspaper work. On the surface, it might at first appear as though a debate would be an excellent method of presenting the Truth to the public. Let it not, however, be forgotten that it is also an excellent method of presenting the error to the public. While it is true that Truth is mighty and will prevail, nevertheless "the god of this world" has blinded the eyes of men for eighteen centuries so thoroughly that remarkably few even yet see the beauty and force of the great divine plan of salvation as presented by Jesus and the Apostles. On the contrary, the great mass of mankind have had thoroughly drilled into them heathen philosophy—carefully concocted theories and superstitions—and these are well riveted and fastened from childhood's hour.

An audience hearing a debate have the same difficulty that a jury has when hearing the opposing attorneys discussing the merits of a case. Each speaker has certain talent and ability, and each makes a certain amount of impression. It is the same with the general readers when these debates go before them. Those who have the truth will enjoy the presentation of it, while those who have been schooled and prejudiced in favor of the error from childhood will rejoice in its presentation.

Added to this is the fact that the debates in general are in the nature of a war of words, the disputants each seeking to undo the other's arguments and to prove his own. In such a war of words the truth is at a disadvantage. Why, do you ask? We answer, Because those who are of the truth are bound by the Golden Rule, not only in its letter, but also in its spirit; and their presentation of the Truth must be along absolutely fair lines that take in the context and the spirit thereof. On the other hand, our opponents seem to have no restrictions nor restraints. Any kind of argument, regardless of the context, regardless of the Golden Rule, regardless of everything, is considered permissible. Indeed they do not even stop to consider such a trifling (?) matter as the Golden Rule or to exact allegiance to the letter and spirit of the inspired Word. Thus our opponents always have the advantage, not because they are intellectually brighter, but because they can and do use means to bamboozle the minds of the hearers and readers. This the advocates of the truth dare not do—have not the desire to do, so surely as they have the Spirit of Christ.

So far as the Editor is concerned, he has no desire for further debates. He does not favor debating, believing that it rarely accomplishes good and often arouses anger, malice, bitterness, etc., in both speakers and hearers. Rather he sets before those who desire to hear it, orally and in print, the message of the Lord's Word and leaves to opponents such presentations of the error as they see fit to make and find opportunity to exploit.—Hebrews 4:12.

This should not be understood to mean that the Editor would never again engage in a public debate, but merely that in order to induce him to debate, his opponent would need to be a person of so great prominence as to bring the matter to the attention of everybody. Only such a consideration would be a proper offset to the wide presentation of error thus accomplished. Otherwise we prefer merely to present the truth as the Lord opens the way and to leave the presentation of error and its circulation entirely in the hands of others.

JUDGE RUTHERFORD'S SPICY DEFENSE

Brother Rutherford, grieved by the various untruthful, slanderous attacks upon the Editor, has prepared a pamphlet in my defense. A copy of it has just been handed me. I have not yet read it, though, of course, I knew of its preparation and in a general way of its contents. I prefer not to have anything to do with its publication. It explains Brother Rutherford's views as a lawyer, as a brother, and as a man who most fully understands the entire situation. It contains some interesting illustrations and is priced at ten cents per copy, or eight dollars per hundred copies, postpaid. It is not unreasonable to expect that nearly all of our readers will be very glad to have this pamphlet, as it will furnish them with evidence on every point thus far brought forward by my maligners.

Orders for the pamphlets should be addressed to Judge Rutherford, New York City, P. O. Box 51. However, we will have a supply at THE WATCH TOWER Office, and, if one is ordering other things, this pamphlet can be supplied also. It is entitled, "A GREAT BATTLE IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL HEAVENS."

VOL. XXXVI BROOKLYN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1915 No. 10

THE NEW CREATURE'S CONQUEST OF HIS FLESH

"Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."—Colossians 3:9, 10.

Development is necessary to the life of the new creation. In our text the term "old man" stands for the human will, which once dominated the being. All who become Christians in the Bible sense of the term not only accept Christ and trust in him as their Savior, but devote their old will, their old nature, to death. Thenceforth that old nature is repudiated, and is no longer to control the life of the individual. But the body of the "old man"—the fleshly tabernacle—is still retained after the old will has been discharged and the new will has come in. The new creature, with new impulses, a new purpose, uses the mortal body as its servant. The new will is now master.

This new will is the will of God, or in other words, it is a will to do God's will. Our consecration is a consecration

to do the will of God, to be dead to any other will, whether our own natural will or the will of another. This includes the dedication of everything we have or had hoped to have as human beings. It means the laying on the altar our every power, our every ability, our strength, our time, our pocketbook, our influence. Those who make a covenant of sacrifice are accepted up to the full number of the elect. They will, if faithful unto death, receive new bodies in the resurrection.

KNOWLEDGE THE BASIS OF DEVELOPMENT

In our context the Apostle explains how this putting off and putting on is done. This "new man"—this spirit-begotten new creature—is to develop by acting upon the knowledge that it gains. We had some knowledge before consecration, or we would not have thought of taking such a step. First, the Lord permitted a measure of knowledge to come to us. Then when we had accepted the terms and presented ourselves for sacrifice, the Savior's merit was imputed to us, and we were received of God and begotten as new creatures by his Spirit, his power; and the good work has been going on in all those who have met the necessary conditions of development.

We must grow in love. The Apostle tells us that we might have all knowledge and yet be as nothing. Knowledge alone will not suffice. However, knowledge is the basis of faith and obedience. Without knowledge we could accomplish nothing. Knowledge shows us the will of God on the one hand and the selfishness that appertains to the fallen human nature on the other. It shows us the love and generosity that belong to the new nature. It shows us the Lord's character —the character that we are to imitate. We are to be "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us" —created us as new creatures.

As St. Paul expresses it elsewhere, we are to be transformed—formed over. We have a new will from the beginning, but it requires some time to transform our minds. Our minds being accustomed to reasoning along the lines of the flesh, the old nature, it takes some length of time before they are so entirely renewed as to view things from the divine standpoint. But only as we thus progress can we form a Christlike character.

RENEWING OF CHURCH AND WORLD DIFFERENT

Not only are we to have our minds renewed, but our bodies are to be brought into subjection to the new mind, our new will. Because our bodies are earthly and imperfect through the fall, we can never hope to bring them into complete subserviency to the new mind. There will always be more or less of conflict. But we are to deaden, to treat as though they were nothing, these desires and impulses of the depraved flesh. Thus we make progress, being transformed day by day into the image and likeness of our God and of his dear Son. Those who attain this character-likeness to the Master will in due time be granted the divine nature.

This change of mind comes only to those who are spirit-begotten; it does not come to the world. The Lord will deal with the world during the incoming age. Mankind also will need to be renewed; but theirs will not be a renewal such as is granted to the church. The World will need a new mind, and must learn to overcome all their fallen tendencies, but they will be required to give up only that which is sinful. Their renewal will be along the lines of restitution, a restoration, to the former condition of the perfect man. They will not have a new mind that is in conflict with human nature, as has the church. The world will not renounce their human nature; they are to renounce only sin and to bring their human nature, by divine assistance then granted, up to perfection.

ALL MUST ATTAIN THE LIKENESS OF GOD

In the end, we see, every being who will have everlasting life on any plane will be in the likeness of God—the image of God. Father Adam in his perfection had this image; the holy angels have this image; Jesus had this image of the Father; and the church must have this image. The world, also, by and by, must have this image of God. All must love and serve righteousness. Wrong must always be repulsive. All who attain life everlasting will see divine wisdom, justice, love and power, and will thoroughly conform themeselves to that standard in all their thoughts, words and deeds. All who do not attain this image of God by the close of the next age—the thousand years of Christ's reign—will be cut off from life, without remedy.

The Lord Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) To know God means to have intimate acquaintances with him, to be like him in character, to be able to view matters as he views them. Only those who have the mind of God will be granted eternal life—whether of the church now or of the world in the next age.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN MIND AND BODY

St. Paul brings to the attention of the church the fact, that all true Christians are new creatures in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and therefore may be spoken of as separate and distinct from their mortal bodies. (See verses 1 to 4 of same chapter.) This will never be true of the world in general; it is true only of those who are begotten of the holy Spirit. The Lord does not judge these new creatures according to the imperfections of their flesh, because these are covered. They will prove the measure of their love and loyalty by the way in which they fight against sin and the desires of the flesh, and especially against a rebellious spirit in their own flesh.

Each child of God has an enemy in his own body, and the more so because our bodies through the fall have become more or less surcharged with sin. The new creature wills to do the Lord's will. Hence from the time that the new creature has an existence there is a conflict between this new creature and the old body. The Apostle Paul declared that he browbeat his body, kept his body under the control of the new mind; and he intimates that this is the only way to be a follower of the Lord Jesus.—1 Corinthians 9:27.

THE FLESH TO BE THOROUGHLY SUBJUGATED

This matter of keeping the body under had a beginning. All our former lives we had been asking our body, What is your will? What is your desire? What will please you? Therefore it is a somewhat difficult matter now to bring the body under the control of the new will and to be able to say, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done." Just as a colt needs to be broken, to be brought into subjection, so it is with our flesh. If it is thoroughly broken, it will remain in subjection. From time to time it will, of course, attempt to assert itself, but it must be conquered; for if it is not thoroughly broken and subjugated, if it is allowed to have more or less of its own way, there will always be danger of a runaway or of some other difficulty, and of final catastrophe.

We are not to take the Apostle too literally when he says that he browbeats his body. His thought is, not that we are literally to handle our body in a rough way, to maltreat it, as some have thought, but that we are to subjugate it, to teach it a thorough lesson. The object of this is that the body may learn to be a good servant of the new creature. The Spirit of the Lord cannot quicken our mortal body until we have first brought it into subjection. Even if the triumph of the new creature means the quick death of the body, it must be made submissive; for after we have decided that as human beings our own will is not to be any longer in control, but the Lord's will is to govern, the only thing to do is to set to work to use our body in his service. This will be done more or less thoroughly as we grow as new creatures. As this battle goes on, if it is faithfully waged, our flesh becomes weaker, and the new mind is renewed day by day. We learn more fully to put our bodies under and bring them into the service of the new will. It should be manifest to all that we are seeking to do the will of the Lord; and that the will of the flesh is dead, and not to be entertained for a moment.

THE TESTING OF THE BELIEVER

The Apostle tells one reason why he kept his body under—lest, having instructed others how they should do, he himself should make a failure and become a castaway. Likewise with every true Christian this is a matter of supreme importance, and should be particularly noted by every one who is a teacher in the church.

In choosing a bride for his Son, the Father is making a selection from those who accept the Gospel message and desire to draw near to him. The first test is as to whether or not they will make a full consecration to God. The second test is as to whether, after they have made their consecration, they will conquer the flesh and bring it into subjection. The third test is as to whether they will strive always to keep the flesh in subjection, even unto the end of the way.

The Lord is watching our course continually. His eye is ever upon us to see to what extent we are zealous in crucifying our flesh. Those who are in dead earnest in this matter are the ones whom he is seeking. He seeks a godly seed—those who have the disposition of the Master; and the Master's disposition has ever been in direct antagonism to everything sinful. "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," was spoken by the Father of our Lord Jesus. Moreover, the Master gladly laid down his life in sacrifice to do the Father's will and to save the world.

And so the Father has, during the Gospel age, been seeking for the bride of his Son those who pre-eminently love righteousness, who hate iniquity, and are glad to be living sacrifices, to be used up in God's service. In proportion as we manifest the spirit which actuated our Lord—a love for that which is right, a promptness to fight against all sin in ourselves, and a spirit of loving sacrifice—we shall be copies of God's dear Son. If we fail to have a proper zeal and energy in this respect, we shall be unfit to be granted the reward promised—"the prize of the high calling"—and shall be rejected, be cast away.

One who had committed the sin unto death would be a castaway in the most absolute sense. Even the Great Company class must prove loyal of heart and mind and must hate sin, though cast away as regards the "prize." The degree of love and zeal we manifest in fighting against the weaknesses of the flesh has much to do with the attainment of the prize, in determining whether or not we shall be inheritors of the highest nature with our Master—the divine nature.

We find that in our flesh there is a tendency to revive from its condition of reckoned deadness, and to struggle for supremacy. Hence, as we have said, the new nature must be continually on the alert to maintain its ascendency, to fight the good fight of faith that we may gain the "crown of life," may be overcomers in the highest sense—"more than conquerors." We are in a position of great responsibility.

There are at the present time two classes in the world—the fleshly and the spiritual. The fleshly live according to their natural tendencies; the spiritual live by faith, contrary to the flesh. Those who become footstep followers of Jesus are begotten of the holy Spirit; hence they have been lifted to a higher plane than others of mankind. To them the old things of their past lives have passed away, have been renounced, and all things have become new.

The Apostle declares that if these live after the flesh—according to their natural inclinations and the desires and ambitions of the world—it means that they have descended again to the plane of the world; and they will die. It is only if we faithfully endure. If we suffer with Christ, that we shall reign with him. Our sufferings with Christ are not in the upholding of some foolishness—of wearing a certain cut of hair, or a certain style of dress, etc.—but in active opposition to error, in living apart from the spirit of the world and in energy and faithfulness according to opportunity, in the spread of the truth. The Lord's side is to be our side in everything. This brings us into conflict with the world and with the tendencies and proclivities of our own flesh, for we naturally love the things that the world loves.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND OUR DANGER

We are not to blame the world for living according to the flesh; for this course is the natural bent of the fallen nature. But it is different with us, by reason of the fact that we have sacrificed the earthly in order to obtain the spiritual. It would be a disastrous matter with us if we should live after the flesh, should sow to the flesh, instead of to the Spirit. It is not possible for us to live fully up to the Spirit, but it is possible for us to make a strenuous endeavor to do so. We can live after the Spirit, though we cannot measure up to the perfect standard. We can do our best; we can make our plans and arrangements in harmony with what God's holy Spirit would dictate and approve, as God gives us wisdom to discern. This is the only course by which we can reach the eternal life and glory which the Lord has promised to the faithful church.

We recognize, indeed, that there are two classes which will attain spiritual life; but only one will be granted an abundant entrance into the kingdom. Those who sow liberally to the Spirit will reap the larger reward. Those who sow sparingly will reap the smaller reward. Those who are striving to live in full harmony with God, and contrary to everything that is in opposition to God, seeking by prayer and the study of the Word to ascertain his will, shall win the promised prize.—Philippians 3:14.

But those who have been spirit-begotten, and who then live according to the flesh, are not to expect any reward—not even restitution. There can be nothing for them but the second death. They have had their choice for life and have abused it. Christ came to give one full, individual opportunity to each and all—and only one. God gave Adam an opportunity for everlasting life, but he was then inexperienced with sin and its consequences; hence, he is to be granted in his awakening an opportunity equal to that given the remainder of the world. Christ died to redeem all, and thus to give to all mankind, in due time, a full, fair opportunity for life eternal, after experience with the nature and the results of sin.

The church are having their trial now. The class, which is now receiving its opportunity, is limited. None can come to the full degree of responsibility, except those who have the clear enlightenment and special opportunities now granted to only a comparatively few. These, after having once been begotten of the holy Spirit, must gain spiritual life, or else fail altogether and go into the second death.

In the next age the world will be brought forth from the tomb—the death state—in an imperfect, blemished condition. The great Mediator will be in charge of the world's interests, having then made satisfaction to Justice on their behalf. It will be his mission to help mankind up to perfection—all who will. But any who continue to live, or to attempt to live, after the sinful cravings of their fallen flesh will eventually be destroyed; for those who prefer sin, after coming to a clear knowledge of the difference between good and evil, and having access to all needed assistance to rise out of their fallen estate, will be cut off as cumberers of the ground and corrupters of the earth. Those who during the incoming age would attain eternal life on the human plane must seek to live in harmony with God's law, with righteousness; and thus they will reach full perfection and restitution, under the guidance and assistance of The Messiah.

THE SPECIAL BATTLES OF THE CHURCH

But much more glorious than even this is the prospect before those who are now faithfully running the race for the prize of the high calling, held out to the church! There are, however, enemies yet to be vanquished, and victories to be gained, if we would receive the crown. Until the final battle is fought, we must not relax our vigilance for a moment nor lay aside one piece of our armor.

Considering particularly what are some of the battles of the new creature, we realize that many of them pertain to the weaknesses of the flesh through heredity—sin working in our mortal bodies, seeking to bring us into captivity. After we have become new creatures, the gross sins of the flesh gradually become distasteful even to those once in bondage to them. When these are conquered, a great victory has been won. But there are subtle sins that lurk in the flesh of all those who have become the Lord's; and these dispositions hide themselves in such a manner that they frequently deceive the new will, which needs to be educated up to a clear appreciation of the principles of righteousness.

It is an advance lesson in the school of Christ that hatred of a brother is murder, that we are not only to hate the act of murder, but also the murder spirit, and are so fully to cast out this spirit as to have nothing but love and kindly wishes in the heart toward others, even our enemies. Only the more advanced and better drilled pupils in the school of Christ see clearly and distinctly the meaning of the Apostle's words when he denominates anger (fleshly wrath), malice, hatred, strife, envyings, and evil speakings, as the works of the devil. These must be fought to the finish.

All the children of God must come to see that "love worketh no ill to his neighbor" nor does it wish ill. We must see that such evil disposition originates in the mind, in the heart; and as soon as the true soldier of the cross perceives any of these sins manifesting themselves outwardly or lurking in his heart, he will begin a vigorous campaign against them, and will go to the throne of grace for the promised grace to help in time of need. Only thus can the child of God keep his record clear and retain the Lord's favor and blessing.

Let each of us then, dearly beloved, apply earnestly to ourselves these lessons. Let us diligently follow the example of the beloved Apostle Paul, and "keep under" our bodies, lest we become castaways. Let us keep ever before our minds the thought that we have "put off the old man with his deeds;" and that we have "put on the new man," and are now on trial for life or death eternal; that we are being tested, are being given the opportunity to prove the sincerity and depth of our consecration to the Lord. Surely this will spur us on and energize us to faithfulness. Let us remember that the keeping under of our body appertains to food and drink, to the clothing we wear, to the way we spend our consecrated time, to our every thought, word and deed.

These battlings of the new mind against the flesh are a "good fight"—good in the sense that they are fightings against the intrenched weaknesses and besetments of the fallen nature, against temptation from within and without, that appeal to us as human beings. They are a "fight of faith" because the entire course of the new creature is one of faith; for "we walk by faith, not by sight." We could never succeed in this fight unaided. Hence we must keep very close to the Lord. We must "watch and pray," putting on and keeping securely fastened to us the whole armor of God. The time is short in which to complete this work in ourselves. Then let us be diligent!

THE "CROWN OF LIFE"—WHO WILL RECEIVE IT?

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."—James 1:12.

The above words of the Apostle James are a part of an earnest exhortation to all the church of God scattered abroad. "Blessed is the man who endureth [with fortitude] temptation." Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the devil into some form of rebellion against the divine Word or divine providences. They will have schemes, theories or desires which they will prefer to the Lord's plan and way; and their own theories, plans and ways will be found, when analyzed, to be based upon selfishness and ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, pride, etc. It is only such as endure such temptations and besetments with fortitude, by the grace of God conquering and subduing the fleshly mind, that will receive the promised crown.

The Apostle here speaks of the final reward as being "the crown of life." It might be possible to view this matter of the crown of life from different standpoints; for instance, to think of life as being a crowning blessing, on whatever plane of being. Those who will be brought into the Lord's favor during the Millennial age will, after the close of that age, if proven worthy, gain everlasting life. In other words, they will be crowned with a life which will be endless. The ancient worthies will have this life everlasting. They will be crowned with life. Life, perfect, unending, is the greatest blessing God could bestow. Then the little flock will be especially crowned with life; for they will have life on the superior plane, the life of the divine nature—the nature of Jehovah; life in the very highest form will be their crown. So we think of all these things as being crowns of life when all have been tested and proven to the end of their course.

THE CROWN ABOVE ALL OTHERS

But we have reason to suppose that St. James is here referring to the church, the bride of Christ, the most blessed of all humanity. The church is now especially on trial. This trial of our love, endurance, faith, patience, is for the purpose of demonstrating which of us will be found worthy of the chiefest of all blessings—the divine nature, which God has promised to those who love him—love him more than they love houses or lands or bonds, more than they love wife or husband or parents or children or self, or any other king. God will have a reward for others, also; but it will not be this highest crown, which he offers to the bride of his Son alone.

What constitutes the temptation spoken of in our text? The answer of the Scriptures is that the Lord has said there will come trials and temptations—disciplinings—to those who are his, to develop their character, to prove their steadfastness and loyalty. Without trials and temptations our allegiance to God would never be shown. Self-love might be reigning in our hearts, and we would not recognize it unless it were demonstrated. It is very easy to think how much we love the Lord and how much we would like to do for him. Then comes the temptation to sloth, and to do something for ourselves instead of for the Lord. It is easy for us to think we love his will, and to sing:

"I love thy will, O God."

Then we are severely tried on that line, and we sometimes find out that our love for His will needs yet farther development and greater fixity.

Our covenant with the Lord is to love him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are to live up to this standard in the spirit of our minds so far as we are able by divine assistance, trusting to the merit of the precious blood to cover our unavoidable deficiencies. Yea, we are to "lay down our lives for the brethren." The temptation comes to love other things more, to love self more than we love God and the brethren. The Lord permits these trials and temptations and difficulties to come to us. The way we meet these, we think, will have much to do in deciding whether we shall be worthy of the highest crown of life.

THE CROWN OF LIFE AFTER THE TRIAL

"When he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." The expression, "when he is tried," does not mean one trial merely; but our entire experience is spoken of as a trial, a test of loyalty. Our whole life is a matter of trial or testing to see how sincere we are, how fully we love the Lord, what we are willing to sacrifice, in harmony with our covenant. "When he is tried," then, means, when his trial is over. Then he will receive the "crown of life." He will not get it before. That would not necessarily mean, however, that he would get the crown the minute the trial was over—as soon as his sacrifice was completed in death. Jesus slept until the third day before he received his crown. The Apostles and others slept for many centuries before they received theirs.

It does not mean, either, that the very minute or the very day on which the Christians had fully demonstrated his faithfulness to the Lord he would immediately fall asleep or would be instantly ushered into honor and immortality by the glorious change of the first resurrection. The Lord might have further purposes of usefulness, etc., in regard to his children before their sacrifices would be completed.

So with every phase of our trial and testing there should be a demonstration of our loyalty. Let the trials come, then, and let them continue to come. No matter what our natural infirmities may be, we shall be granted grace sufficient; and we are expected to be loyal under all conditions, at all times, until the end.

DEVELOPMENT AS NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

"Strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."—Hebrews 5:14.

The Apostle here seems to have in mind some who are babes in Christ, some who have immature conceptions of God and his plan, who lack spiritual development, contrasting them with others who are more developed, who have become men in Christ Jesus—who are "of full age," as St. Paul expresses it, mature in Christian attainment. "Strong meat" belongs to these. The Apostle has given a reproof to some who, considering the length of time they have been in Christ, should have been strong in the faith, in doctrine, in spiritual life, and should be qualified to teach others. Yet still they were children, needing others to teach them again the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, needing still to be fed on milk, even yet not able to assimilate "strong meat."

Beginners who have not long known Christ, who are new in respect to the truths of God's plan, are not to be choked with strong meat. These may be fed upon the simpler truths, which they can assimilate. They need "the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby." Some of the Lord's people, who have been longer in the way, in talking with the newly consecrated unwisely begin to tell them the truths regarding immortality, trinity, etc., before they are able to digest them. These are giving strong meat to babes, and are liable to drive them away from the table of the Lord, giving them spiritual dyspepsia, so that they are unable longer to eat even of the simpler food furnished by the Lord.

For those who are only beginners in the good way, there is plenty of food in God's Word of the more easily digestible sort; food which should be helpful to new creatures in Christ who are just beginning to walk in the narrow path. We are not to understand, however, that they are to continue for quite a period of time to live exclusively on milk. As they begin to grow and develop on a milk diet, they may be given somewhat stronger food, until after a time they will be able to digest the stronger features of the truth, and to draw nourishment from them. Some develop and are able to digest strong meat much more rapidly than others. Those who have not been falsely taught regarding Scriptural doctrines, who have not been steeped for many years in the errors brought into the church during the dark ages, are often much more ready and able to grasp the truth on these subjects than are those who have been long under the blinding influence of error along these lines.

SYSTEMATIC STUDY NECESSARY

Those who are of humble, teachable mind, seeking a "thus saith the Lord" for all they accept, not trying to uphold any theories of their own, but to follow only the Lord, can generally, by taking the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and their Bible, and taking up the plan step by step, in a systematic, orderly manner, as it is presented, proving every statement by the sure Word of God, see the truth regarding these fundamental doctrines with little difficulty. In this way they gain a comprehensive view of the whole plan of God, and can see how its various features fit and dovetail into one another; this would be impossible if they heard first only a portion of the plan, disassociated from the rest.

For this reason it is well to urge the newly interested one to read and prove for himself, and not endeavor to explain too much through conversation. Much harm is often done thus by well-meaning friends, in their zeal to have the beginner grasp it all at once, which is impossible; and often their efforts result in confusing the mind of the one seeking the Truth.

SPIRITUAL EYESIGHT A MATTER OF GROWTH

As we look at a little babe, we see that it can crow, can kick a little, can cry somewhat, and to a certain extent can see objects. It has a certain amount of appreciation of things beautiful, of things terrorizing, of things happifying. But it does not see things very clearly nor comprehend them. If we pass our hand before its eyes, it apparently has not a focus. As with young kittens, which cannot tell what is near and what is far off, so with beginners, babes, in spiritual matters. The younger ones in their attempt to study God's Word, are apt to go tripping along through it, and think they see this or that. They cannot be entrusted with important truths at first; for they would be pretty certain to be stumbled.

But as these grow older, they can "rightly divide" the truth, they can distinguish truth from error, they can tell what would be hurtful and what would be helpful. Even a child that burns itself at the fire learns to look out for that which will burn, and learns to approach the fire very carefully, very judiciously. As all this is true as relates to temporal matters, and as the sense of appreciation and comprehension develops in the babe, so in babes in Christ, there is a development of the sense of appreciation and ability to comprehend the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of God's wisdom and love, and the fulness and grandeur of his great plan with all its varied features.

NECESSARY FOOD ALWAYS IN "DUE SEASON"

To gain this appreciation, it is necessary, not only to read the truth, but to think upon it, to make it our own, to strive earnestly to conform our lives to it. It is better of course, for one to merely read so many pages or chapters of the Bible than to read some worthless thing; but to simply read a certain amount in the Bible without understanding accomplishes little. The Bible needs to be studied; and the Lord has never left his people without teachers of his own choosing, who were able to lead the dear sheep of the great Shepherd's fold into the green pastures where they could obtain whatever food was needed at that time. As the gradual unfolding of truth in its times and seasons has added to the quantity and variety of food required by the flock of God for their proper nourishment, it has been supplied by him through instrumentalities which he has raised up for the purpose in due season.

The real saints of God have never been left without all needed supplies in every age. In our own day more truth has unfolded than at any previous period of the church's history. More and richer food is now necessary, to strengthen the church for the peculiar conditions and testings of this day; and more has been supplied. But as we have stated, and as the Apostle in our text shows, there are various degrees of development in the church of Christ; and some have been accepted from the world in these latter days to take the places of some who have through unfaithfulness lost their crowns. Hence the wisdom that cometh from above is required to feed and nourish these weaker ones properly.

FIRST LESSONS IN SCHOOL

In a school there are lessons arranged according to the ability and comprehension of the pupils. When the primary lessons in spelling are given, the teacher begins with small, simple words, instead of long words. Such words as c-o-w, cow; c-a-t, cat, are given first. A teacher who is wise and understands her business would not think of starting little children out with such a word as "prognostication," or "hippopotamus." The pupil would first be given more simple and easily comprehensible words. Object lessons, by pictures, etc., are also used at first to attract the eye, and thus to assist the child mind.

And so with religious matters. Those who would give proper instructions to others must be qualified to teach. The Lord has placed the various members in the body of Christ "as it hath pleased him." To some he has given apostles and workers of miracles; to others evangelists and teachers and pastors. In the early history of the church, in its infantile condition, miracles—object lessons and proofs to the eye, to the ear, the outward physical senses—were necessary, and hence were supplied. As the church became established, these outward evidences in connection with the truth passed away.

The Apostle Paul says, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child, I understood as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." (1 Corinthians 13:11) And so with every true follower of Christ. As he grows and develops, step by step, as his senses become exercised to discern good and evil—what is true, what is right, what is profitable, what is comprehended in the glorious high calling of the church, what is included in full consecration to Christ—he more and more puts away his childish views, his immature conceptions, and becomes educated and advanced in the things of God—the deep things. A beginner, who had not learned to study the Word of God, could take it and get out of it things that would be really harmful to him. One must learn to take Bible truths in their setting—to see what they mean, how they apply, to whom they apply, etc.—or all will be confusion and contradiction. One can bring sweet music from an instrument only when he learns how to manipulate the keys, how to combine the various chords; otherwise only discord is the result.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE LONG IN THE WAY

There are certain principles laid down in the Bible. We need to get a grasp on these principles and apply them in our daily lives. There is the principle of justice—a foundation principle. This principle must be recognized and practiced before we are in a proper condition to build upon this foundation the principles of love, mercy, gentleness, etc., all of which must be incorporated into our lives, our characters as children of God. We need to learn what justice means, what true love means. The standards of the world along these lines have become much perverted, and we need to be properly taught from the only authoritative source—the Word of God. We must learn how to apply these principles.

Those who have been for some time drinking from the fountain of truth, and feeding at the table of the Lord, where the food is pure, unadulterated, nourishing, should be fully established in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. Much of the superstructure of "gold, silver and precious stones" should be already erected, and the good work of character-building should be progressing steadily day by day. We should be firmly rooted and grounded in Christ, so that nothing can move us. We should be able to discern clearly between truth and error on every important point. We should be so loyal to the Lord and his Word that we shall rejoice in the glorious privilege of proclaiming it at every suitable opportunity. We should know what we believe and why we believe it, and be courageous and uncompromising in declaring the truth which has so blessed our own hearts and lives.

DIRECTIONS FOR STARTING BACILLUS LACTINE CULTURE

Crush one tablet of whatever preparation is used and stir into one quart of good, sweet milk which has been brought to blood heat. Cover, and put in a warm place until it becomes a firm clabber. This will require about twenty-four hours in winter, less time in summer unless kept in a cool place. Then shake, beat or churn for a few minutes, and put the jar in a cool place. It is ready for use as soon as it is shaken, but improves by standing awhile. Shake or churn as often as served, that it may be perfectly smooth.

After you are satisfied that the buttermilk is as good as can be made with the tablets, discontinue their use, and substitute a good half teaspoonful of the buttermilk for each quart of milk, and treat in the same manner. Should your buttermilk—from overheating the milk, or from any other cause—be injured or become unpalatable, it will be necessary to go through the same process as at first, with a fresh tablet. If regularly, properly made, there will never be reason for renewal of tablet.

"*Directions for Use*" usually—perhaps always—state that pasteurized milk cannot be used to prepare the buttermilk. Six months' daily experience has demonstrated that this is a mistaken idea.

LA GRIPPE AND TYPHOID FEVER REMEDIES

One of the simplest we know of for La Grippe and Typhoid Fever, especially in their earlier stages, is to put the bulk of a pea of cayenne pepper into a little milk, stir it thoroughly and swallow it. Do this twice a day for about three days.

FORGIVENESS IS BLESSED

JUNE 13.—PSALM 32.

SINS FORGIVEN, COVERED, BLOTTED OUT—INIQUITY NOT IMPUTED—THE GUILELESS SPIRIT—WHO MAY PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS—UNDER THE COVENANT OF GRACE—UNDER THE NEW COVENANT—SOME SINS NOT FORGIVABLE BUT EXPIABLE—"LET THEM PRAY OVER HIM"—MORTAL SIN OR SIN UNTO DEATH.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."—Verse 1.

The Scriptures bring to our attention the thought that sins may be forgiven in the sense that God will not continue to treat us as sinners, the sins, however, remaining to be dealt with—merely covered. They also show that the time for actually blotting out sins is in the future, not in the present life. To illustrate: The Christian who has transgressed divine law quite unintentionally and entirely through inherited weaknesses may promptly go to God for forgiveness through the Redeemer, and is assured that his sin is covered, that God will not remember it against him nor treat him as a sinner, because Jesus Christ the righteous made full atonement for such sin.

There is another class of sin, partly of weakness and heredity, and partly assented to by the mind. This we might term a mixed sin. The Lord, in forgiving this sin, will restore the joys of his countenance to his child and entirely cover or overlook the transgression in proportion as it was unwilful, unintentional, through ignorance; but he will punish that portion which was of knowledge and connivance or assent of the mind.

There is still another kind of sin, which the Bible describes as a wilful sin—against light, against knowledge. This is because the light of knowledge and truth is the light of God's Spirit of truth; and whoever wilfully transgresses it transgresses the Spirit of truth. Such sin Jesus declared has never forgiveness, neither in this age nor in the age to come. (Matthew 12:32) But this does not mean that the individual will be punished for it forever. It simply means what it says—that such sin cannot be forgiven and could only be expiated. If, however, it were a sin against full light, the expiation would mean the second death. We have reason to believe that on account of our inherited weaknesses and unholy environment, nearly all sins committed by God's people may be classed as mixed sins—only partly wilful.

In any event, a man who realizes his transgression forgiven and his sin covered must have great peace and joy toward the Lord, and blessing that is beyond description. He may, however, at the same time, carry the marks of those forgiven sins in his body to his dying day; and he may perhaps be troubled with aches and pains and with various diseases as a result of sins that are forgiven—to his dying moment. The sins, therefore, are not blotted out all that while, although they are forgiven. The marks of them are seen in his flesh or his mind or in whatever way they have blemished him.

St. Peter tells us that our sins are to be blotted out fully at the second coming of Christ. We can readily see how this will be; for the promise to the church is that in the resurrection they will be given perfect bodies; that which is in part and imperfect will be done away, and that which is perfect will be theirs forever in the body of the resurrection—"sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown in weakness, raised in power; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body."—1 Corinthians 15:43, 44.

CONDITIONS FOR FORGIVENESS

Much confusion of thought prevails respecting the conditions upon which forgiveness of sins may be expected. This is not the fault of the Bible, which makes the matter very clear and very plain. It is the fault of our confused theologies, which have mixed up everything for us. To understand the matter we must remember that the whole world, as the children of Adam, rest under divine sentence of death, with no offer of hope directly made to them. The Lord's people have a revelation from him, informing them that God purposes great things for the world by and by through Messiah's kingdom, but that these are not applicable to them at the present time. The mercies and favors of God, including forgiveness of sins, are all confined for the present to those who come into covenant relationship with God.

What is meant by covenant relationship? some may ask. We reply that God entered into a covenant with the Jewish nation, through Moses as the mediator of their Law Covenant. A part of that arrangement was that on the basis of certain sacrifices for sins—sacrifices of bulls and goats—God entered into a covenant, or bargain, with that nation. These sacrifices of bulls and goats every year on the Day of Atonement imputed to the nation forgiveness of sins for that year; that all the people might be in relationship with God. Thus they had the right to come to God in prayer in respect to any matter of God's promise or in respect to the forgiveness of their sins, as in the case of David.

But this privilege did not extend to the Gentiles—it was merely an arrangement made with the Jews. And even with the Jews it was only a typical arrangement. It foreshadowed the permanent arrangement of this Gospel age, based upon the "better sacrifices" of the antitypical Moses—Jesus.

Since the time of Jesus another covenant has been opened, while the Law Covenant may be said to be inoperative for the present. The covenant now applicable to Christians is called scripturally a Covenant of Sacrifice (Psalm 50:5), or a Covenant of Grace. It is a Covenant of Sacrifice because all who enter into this covenant with God sacrifice their earthly rights and interests, accepting instead the spiritual blessings, which God has promised and which they can see with the eye of faith.

Jesus was the first one who made the Covenant of Sacrifice. Holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, he presented his body a living sacrifice to God, saying, "Lo! I come, as in the volume of the Book it is written of me, to do thy will, O my God." (Psalm 40:7, 8; Hebrews 10:7) Thus he surrendered his will, and with it everything and every power he possessed. During the three and a half years of his ministry, he zealously carried out this covenant unto death, even the death of the cross. For this cause God highly exalted him, giving him the perfection of the spirit nature, to which he attained at his resurrection—glory, honor and immortality forever.—Phil. 2:8-11.

The work of this Gospel age is to call out from amongst the sinner race such as may have a similar spirit, or disposition, to that which Jesus had. None, like him, are holy, harmless, undefiled separate from sinners; but what they lack in this respect is made up to them by the imputation of the merit of Jesus so that, as the Apostle declares, they are accepted of God in the Beloved One. And being thus accepted, they are privileged to enter into the same Covenant of Sacrifice which Jesus entered into. With him, they say to the Father, Lo! we present ourselves in harmony with everything written in your book, to do your will even unto death. It is the same covenant! and in describing this, the Apostle declares that we walk in Jesus' steps and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—1 Pet. 2:21; Col. 1:24.

Many seem not aware that only such as are in covenant relationship with God have any right to go to God in prayer, to ask either forgiveness of sins or anything else. Nevertheless, this must be clear to every one who will think on the subject. God declares that he heareth not sinners, and that he has made only one provision whereby any may come to him. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," he declares. (John 14:6) He is the Advocate for those who become his disciples and who engage to walk in his steps; but he is not the Advocate for the world—merely for the special class, his followers. In due time, at the close of this age and the opening of the Millennium, he will become the Mediator for the whole world, will make satisfaction for all their sins, and will take over every member of the race under his divine supervision. His Mediatorial kingdom is arranged with this in view. Even then, the world will not go to the Father with their sins nor with their prayers, but merely go to the great Mediator between God and men—between God and the world. They will have blessings and favors then abundantly, under the arrangement provided; but they can have nothing now. The only ones who can get God's favors at the present time are those who come by the appointed way—through the Covenant of Sacrifice.

THE ADVOCATE'S ONLY TERMS

With false ideas in our minds respecting the penalty for sin—with the idea that it is to be eternal torment—many imagine the Lord Jesus sitting tearfully and dejectedly, waiting for sinners to show the slightest sign of repentance, when he would fly to their relief and accept them without any particular terms or conditions. Nothing could be further from the truth—nothing could be further from the teaching of the Bible. On the contrary, if the sinner thinks of turning from sin to God and comes to Jesus to inquire if he will be his Advocate with the Father and make him satisfactory and acceptable, he is promptly told that he can have this privilege only on certain fixed conditions.

The conditions are stipulated—he must become a disciple of Christ. And this means all that the Master declared saying, "If any man will come after me [be my disciple], let him deny himself [sacrifice his own will], and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) There is no short cut. There are no other terms, and Jesus does not urge any one to accept these terms.

Misinformed evangelists may, in the name of the Lord, urge and make different terms; but they are that far away from the authorized message of God's Word. On the contrary, Jesus said to some in his time, "Sit down and count the cost"—be not hasty; know well what you are doing, and fully determine the matter before you undertake the responsibilities of discipleship. It is better not to vow than, after having vowed, to break the vow. It is better not to put your hand to the plow to become a servant of the Lord than, after taking these vows and entering the service, either to turn back or even to look back, as implying a half-hearted service.

Some one may perhaps suggest that if these views were generally accepted, there would be far fewer professed Christians in the world. We agree to this; but we insist that the Christians would be of a better standard, more acceptable to the Lord. The Lord declares, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life [in the present time], and few there be that find it." These few are to constitute the kingdom class, the bride class, and with Christ are to be the divine agency for blessing all the families of the earth during the thousand years of Christ's reign.

Another point that might be worthy of notice is that when we first come to the Lord, it is not necessary to pray for forgiveness of original sin. He informs us that all the arrangements are made, completed, for those who desire to accept his terms and become his disciples. All, therefore, we have to do is to go to the Lord intelligently, thoughtfully, and tell him how glad we are that he has made these arrangements; and that we gladly accept the terms of discipleship, with the promise that his grace shall be sufficient for us, and with his assurance that all things shall work together for good to the called ones according to his purpose.

It is after these have come into covenant relationship with God that they have need to pray for the forgiveness of their trespasses—their sins of omission or commission conflicting with their covenant of consecration and the divine requirements. Thus this class is privileged to offer the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." These trespasses thus to be forgiven do not include the original sin. That was forgiven freely for all those who accepted Christ and came under this new covenant-arrangement. The trespasses are our failures to come up to the standard required of the Lord after his grace has freed us from the transgressions that are past.

St. James calls our attention to some of the Lord's people who might become sin-sick to such an extent that they would not have access to the throne of grace themselves. Because of carelessness of living, neglect of duties and privileges, disregard of their covenant obligations, a cloud between them and the Father comes thick and dark. They are unable to penetrate this cloud. Their prayers seem not to reach the Father. He is hiding his face from them. Theirs is an extreme case. Through the Apostle the Lord says that if any one shall turn such a transgressor—a Christian who has gotten into such a wrong condition—from the error of his way, he will save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

The Apostle tells the procedure. The sin-sick one should realize his need, so that he would call upon the elders of the church—the senior Christian brethren. He should confess to them his fault or whatever he believes has had to do with separating him from the Lord's favor. They in turn, as members of the body of Christ, may intercede for him to the Lord and may anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him, and the Lord shall raise him up to spiritual health and strength.

BETTER HEALTH—LONGER LIFE

While it is true that the Lord's consecrated people should look forward with joy to their "change" at death, nevertheless it is quite proper that as long as they do live, they should keep their bodies in reasonably good condition, so that their service for the Lord, for the brethren, for their families and all men may be as efficient as possible. These are sufficient reasons for our publishing the advice below. Additionally, however, the Lord's people are interested in the welfare of the world and in everything that will assist mankind. Especially are we expecting simple, helpful knowledge of how to live, because we believe that we are already forty years into the great Millennial period, and that light on every subject is being granted accordingly.

* * *

It has long been noted by physicians that many of the ailments of life are due to diseased conditions of the bowels. To offset this many are using enemas, sometimes styled internal bath. These help some, but are inconvenient, only palliative, and evidently are not in line with the laws of nature. Proper food should keep the system in proper order.

Only recently has it been learned that there are healthful and also injurious bacteria. For instance, the fine butter flavor of first-class butter is found to result from the presence of a certain kind of bacteria, which now is cultivated and obtainable commercially. On the other hand, that which makes other butter rancid is an undesirable species of bacteria, not only unpleasant to the taste, but injurious to the system. Similarly, in the secretions of the mouth, the throat and the alimentary canal, bacteria live—some good, healthful, others injurious.

It has been found that there is a species of bacteria associated with putridity which is highly injurious. Hence the impropriety of eating putrid food, which is apt to foster disease, especially in persons of low vitality. It has been discovered that such bacteria infest the bowels, producing gas or flatulence and hindering the food eaten from giving back the proper nourishment and strength. This bacteria producing putridity is associated sometimes with constipation and sometimes with diarrhoea. In any event, it is undesirable. A relief from this difficulty has been found—good bacteria which, driving out and taking the place of the bacteria of putridity, tends to make the bowels clean and healthy, and to favor digestion and general health.

This new bacteria came to the attention of the world in recent years through noting that the people of Bulgaria are extremely healthy and long-lived. The cause for their good health was sought and found. Not only do they eat plain food, but the Bulgarians use a great deal of sour milk, which contains the healthful bacteria. Not everybody is aware of the fact that, while ordinary ferments are injurious, the proper ferment of milk is very healthful.

Sour milk is being prepared under various names; for instance, Bulgarzoon, Lactobacilline, Fermilac and other preparations. These cultures are sold in tablet and liquid forms. Put into sweet milk according to directions, they germinate and produce what much resembles buttermilk, but is much better than the average buttermilk. The only difficulty about these is the expense. On page 5689 we give directions whereby each reader may start his own culture of this helpful bacteria, Bacillus Lactine, by using only one of the tablets purchased.

The drinking of this milk needs to be continued with some regularity, at least once each day or, perferably, three times, until the bowels are thoroughly cleansed and the culture, Bacillus Lactine, gets well established in the system. It is a peculiarity of this Bacillus Lactine that it passes through the stomach into the bowels without being digested. In very chronic cases it is recommended that the sour milk be used as an enema or internal bath, following a regular water enema, or injection.

A NEW CURE FOR PNEUMONIA

Doctor Park, in the *Medical Record Journal*, tells that he has discovered a new treatment for pneumonia, which seems to effect a cure every time. His published statement, intended for physicians, is briefly stated as follows:

"In 2 ounces of chemically pure distilled water I dissolved 15 grains each of sodium salicylate and the soluble phosphate of iron. This solution is sterilized by heat, and on cooling there is added 15 minims of saturated calcium-creosote mixture, the whole then being passed through a small laboratory porcelain filter. The injections are made through the skin, with an all-glass syringe, using a 27-gauge needle, into one of the large veins of the forearm. Great care, of course, is taken with the asepsis and also to be sure that the needle is within the vein. If it is properly inserted there will be absolutely no pain. If pain is felt, it means that the needle has gone into the muscle instead, and the injection must instantly be stopped and a new trial made. There may be a momentary flushing of the face and occasionally a temporary nausea. The dose varies from 2 to 5 c.c., according to circumstances. The injection must be made very slowly."

PRAYERS THAT ARE HEARD

JUNE 20.—PSALM 141.

MANY MAY WORSHIP, FEW MAY PRAY—ONLY THE SANCTIFIED IN JESUS CHRIST—THEIR FREQUENT NEEDS—"GOD'S EAR OPEN"—THEIR PRAYERS ARISE AS INCENSE TO HIM—LEARNING TO PRAY—WHAT TO PRAY FOR—WATCHING FOR ANSWERS—THE BREATH OF LIFE SPIRITUAL.

"Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me."—V. 9.

When we think of the greatness of the Creator, Maker of Heaven and earth and all therein, and when we think of our own littleness, our weaknesses and imperfections, we are amazed that our God has made any provision whereby even the best of his creatures might hold communion with him in prayer. We should not fail to note the difference between worship and praise, which anybody may render to the Lord, and prayers and supplications, which are acceptable only from the Lord's consecrated people and their children while still minors.

To illustrate: It is one thing that the populace may cheer a governor or a king, may remove their hats or bow their heads, but it is quite another thing for that same conglomeration of people to be received by the king or the governor into association as his friends or to have communion with him, to tell him about their matters, to have his counsel and guidance. So, while God has an interest in the whole world of mankind, a deep interest, it is not the same interest that he has in his church. And by his church we mean, not any sect or party or denomination, but those individuals who, regardless of sectarian lines, have entered into a heart covenant with the Lord, renouncing their own wills and accepting, instead, the will of God in Christ. These are the Bible church, whose names are written in heaven. (Hebrews 12:23) These are the ones addressed in the Bible as the saints of God, and respecting whom it is declared, "All things are yours; . . . . and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Corinthians 3:21-23.

This church of God, in all the world, is not numerically strong. As the Bible says, it contains not many rich, nor many wise, not many learned, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom. (1 Corinthians 1:26; James 2:5) Their reigning, their power and their control in the world's affairs will not come until they shall have experienced the resurrection change, and Messiah's kingdom shall be fully inaugurated. Then these shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Revelation 20:4.

WHO MAY PRAY

Strangely enough, many seem to have gotten the thought that anybody, at any time, may rush into the presence of the Almighty God with his requests. The intimation even seems to be that God is unhappy because people do not come to him thus. Such views of prayer indicate a lack of Bible study, Bible information. The Bible teaches that prayer is a great privilege.

Jesus declared, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Furthermore, he indicated the restrictions upon those who would approach the Father through him—they must be his disciples; and to become his disciples, they must take upon themselves certain obligations or vows. They must renounce their own wills, and accept the will of Jesus. They must lay all upon the altar; otherwise they cannot be accepted, cannot be presented to the Father, cannot be begotten of the holy Spirit, cannot be styled or treated as sons of God, cannot be joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in his coming kingdom—cannot have the privilege of sons of God in the present life either—the privilege of prayer and of divine fellowship, communion, instruction.

All these special blessings the Bible reserves for those who become especially, peculiarly, the sons of God. Even in respect to these who have become sons of God, Jesus intimates a danger of their losing the privilege of prayer. He says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will"—not otherwise.—John 15:7.

We believe that misinformation on this subject of prayer has worked disadvantageously to many. The majority, holding intercourse with evil, only occasionally flee to the Lord in some trouble, and that without entering into any covenant with him or receiving any recognition as sons, and without desiring this. If they were rightly informed, the effect upon their minds at first would be to stun them. They would awake suddenly to the realization that they are without God in the world; that their affairs are not subject to his supervision; but that as part of the world, they are under the general curse, or sentence of death.

The highest qualities of the human mind, which lie at the very top of our craniums, are the organs of worship, reverence, veneration, spirituality. Even the wicked, at times, feel that they will please God by praying to him and asking him for some favors. They have not learned that God has addressed them saying, "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to take my covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castesth my words behind thee?"—Psalm 50:16, 17.

It is high time that the difference between the church and the world shall be more distinctly discerned, and that the privileges of the church shall be appreciated. The effect would be to awaken in others a sense of their need for God. Then, in their hours of distress, realizing that they have no God, would they not be the more likely to seek Him earnestly in his appointed way, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through a full consecration—the only terms upon which Jesus would accept them and be their Advocate with the Father, and secure for them the title and privilege of sons of God, valuable both for the present life and for that which is to come?

INCENSE, PRAYER, BEFORE GOD

The Prophet David, in this lesson, pictures the Christian in his distress coming to God in his appointed way: "O Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense." This is the same thought elsewhere expressed in the Bible—that the prayers of God's people rise up before him as a sweet perfume. (Revelation 5:8) And, by the way, we remember that the incense of old, which typified the prayers of the saints, was composed of a rare mixture of spices, giving forth a peculiarly sweet odor; and that nobody was allowed to make that incense except the priests who were to offer it. (Exo. 30:34-38; 37:29) Thus again the Lord shows us that the privilege of prayer, of approaching him in an acceptable manner, is confined to the antitypical priests, called by St. Peter the royal priesthood.—1 Peter 2:9.

Only those of the Lord's people who have consecrated their lives to him, even unto death, are thus represented as members of the sacrificing priesthood, to whom the Apostle wrote, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) The Lord has pledged to this particular class that he will hear them, yea, that he will answer them—not necessarily according to their natural preferences, but he will heed the spirit of their cry and give to them, according to his wisdom, the experiences and blessings most helpful.

WHAT WE SHOULD PRAY FOR

Our prayers should be in harmony with our endeavors. Thus in our lesson the church of Christ are represented as praying the Lord to set a guard over their lips. The thought is that they are striving to keep their lips, their mouths, from utterances that would be injurious to others; and that, on the contrary, they may be helpful to humanity and honoring to God. Also, because they are striving for heart purity and to avoid practising wicked works with evil doers, therefore they pray in harmony, "Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties"—assist me in my determination of opposition to all these things.

How appropriate that the Lord's consecrated people should scrutinize their lives when they come to their Father in prayer! How appropriate for them to note to what extent their blessings, luxuries and dainties have come to them contrary to the Golden Rule! Whoever intelligently thus prays will surely be examining his life to rectify his business relations, so that he may not eat of the dainties which would come from injustice or opposition, but, on the contrary, rejoice in the commonest things of life if they be the best procurable in harmony with the principles of righteousness, the principles of love.

"LET THE RIGHTEOUS SMITE"

The class that are thus in fellowship with God, through prayer and through seeking to be obedient to His arrangements and laws, are so fully engaged that they are able to say, as in this Psalm, that they will take no offense if reproved by the righteous—rather the reproofs of such will be to them like an excellent oil, such as a guest received from his host in ancient times. The true Christians, the class who have the fellowship with God through prayer, have the qualities of heart which the Apostle describes as the fruits of the holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suf-

fering, brotherly-kindness, love. (Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:5-8) And because possessing these, they are not easily offended, but indeed are glad to have such experiences and lessons as the Lord's providences may direct to them—especially if these come through the brethren, and particularly if the brethren who use these administer their rebukes in a Christian manner—in meekness, remembering themselves, lest they also be tempted.—Galatians 6:1.

In such cases, the reproof will be a blessing from the Lord—if given in that spirit and received in that spirit. Neither their heads nor their hearts are broken by such Scriptural reproofs; and they themselves learn to administer admonitions to others in similar manner, so as not to injure, but to help. Their prayers are for each other in what seem to be calamities; and in harmony with the Lord's promise, these seeming calamities and all the affairs of life shall operate together for good to those who love him, to the called ones according to his purpose.

The American Revision gives the wording here differently: "As oil upon the head; let not my head refuse it: for even in their wickedness shall my prayer continue."

In hyperbole the Prophet declares the distress of the church as affecting them even to death. "Our bones are scattered at the mouth of sheol (the grave), as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth"—like the fragments made by the wood-cutter, who considers the chips not worthy to be gathered. But while this may be the estimation of God's saints from the worldly viewpoint, not so is it with God, as the following verse implies: "But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord: for in thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute."

But whatever affliction God's consecrated people may have in the present life, whatever rejection may be their experience at the hands of the great or the wise of this world, they have God's promise of glory, honor, immortality, in the future. In him they trust, and he will not leave them desolate. He has declared, "The gates of hell (sheol, hades) shall not prevail against them"; that it to say, the power of the grave shall not prevail against the Lord's Anointed, Christ and the church—they shall come forth from the power of the tomb glorious in the first resurrection majesty to reign a thousand years.—Revelation 20:6.

"KEEP ME FROM THE SNARES"

Satan is represented as a fowler, a hunter, who is seeking after the Lord's people even as earthly hunters are prone to hunt after speckled birds. Before the invention of powder, the hunters more particularly entrapped their prey with snares and pitfalls. While Satan is represented as being the great arch-enemy, he also is accredited with using agents. Chief amongst his agents, according to the Bible, are those fallen angels of whom he is the prince—"the prince of devils." But he has amongst men many workers of iniquity. These are his servants whether they realize it or not.

As Jesus declared, "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." In consequence of this rule, we understand that many are professedly servants of God who are deceiving themselves, who are really the servants of the wicked one; for his works they do, as Jesus said. They colabor for the upbuilding of unrighteousness, iniquity, injustice, and in holding down the truth and in misleading the people.

The Lord will help his people, he will deliver them from the various snares of the adversary; and eventually Satan and all his cohorts will fall into their own snares. Thus, in ancient times, when the Egyptians thought to capture the Israelites at the Red Sea, the Lord opened the way for the Israelites and they escaped; while their enemies pursued after them and were themselves entrapped and overwhelmed.

Similarly, in the great time of trouble that is approaching, apparently Satan and his servants will be overwhelmed in that trouble in a manner not expected by them. The church will escape those things coming upon the world and will stand before the Son of Man, changed in the power of the first resurrection and called to be with him as his kingdom class. But the world will be ensnared in that great time of trouble. Yet, thank God, it will be for their advantage as they learn the ways of the Lord more fully, and great will be the blessings of the Almighty coming to them!

"PROPHESY AGAINST THE SHEPHERDS"

JUNE 27.—EZEKIEL 34.

SELF-SEEKING SHEPHERDS—FEED THEMSELVES, BUT NOT THE FLOCK—THE TRUE SHEPHERD COMES—SEEKING THE SCATTERED SHEEP—FEEDING THE FLOCK—CARING FOR THE SICK AND LEAN—REPROVING THE SELFISH OF THE FLOCK—DAVID TO BE THE NEW SHEPHERD—ONE FLOCK, ONE SHEPHERD—"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD."

"I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep."—V. 15.

Today's study is a parable, applicable, we believe, at the present time. It begins with an arraignment of the shepherds, the pastors of the Lord's flock. It accuses them of neglecting the sheep in favor of themselves. It declares that they appropriate the wool of the sheep and devour the best of the flock, but neglect to feed the flock—neglect to lead them to the "green pastures" of God's Word and to the "still waters" of divine truth. The parable pictures the Lord's flock, scattered here and there, some wounded, some torn, some lean and hungry, all neglected so far as the false shepherds are concerned.

We cannot understand this as signifying nominal Christians, but the true saints of God. Nominal Christianity fares well enough, but the Lord does not recognize merely nominal Christians as his flock. They are the tares, not the wheat; they are the goats, not the sheep. The shepherds who neglect to care for the sheep, to provide them with the spiritual food and to assist them to find it, to appropriate it, are often quite busy with the goats—the worldly elements of their congregations. Their church arrangements are often especially for the goat, or tare class. These do not care for spiritual food; they must be provided with entertainments, suppers, sociables, discourses on politics, or harmless dissertations well filled with jokes. Do not they furnish most of the money? Would they not withdraw from the church if spiritual food were dispensed? For these some are providing "smokers," parish houses, well supplied with games, etc.

But the shepherds were not appointed by the Lord to look after the goats and the tare class, but to look after the wheat, the Lord's sheep. They are unfaithful pastors, or shepherds; and this prophecy is a reproof to them. The true flock of God is scattered, some here, some there, in many denominations and outside of all. They become the prey of the beastly of the world, and are ensnared into various false doctrines, but "neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock. Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more: for I will deliver my flock from their mouth."

THE SHEPHERD GATHERING HIS FLOCK

Many Bible students believe that this Scripture is in process of fulfilment—that we are living in the parousia of Christ, and that he has been present in the world for some years past, searching out the truly consecrated of his people, and gathering them out of all sectarian systems and from the world, to himself. Surely it is true that the shepherds are ceasing to feed the flock; for very few of the flock of the Lord's consecrated people any longer seek spiritual food at their hands. They are wandering in a famishing condition, and much in danger of falling into the various snares of the adversary.

However, the Great Shepherd himself is with his flock, and is causing his voice to be heard; and the sheep will be gathered to him out of every nation and out of every denomination. Truly, Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me"; and "a stranger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:27, 5) The voice of the Lord, of the Great Shepherd, amongst his sheep is to be heard now because it is the time of his second presence. He is about to complete his flock of this Gospel age and to glorify them with himself in the first resurrection. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow them; they shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

"Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land." Verses 11-13.

— The home-land of the Lord's sheep of this Gospel age is heaven itself, and his bringing them to it will mean their resurrection change. Then they shall be in the kingdom with Jesus himself—still his sheep, still his flock, still his bride, still his members. But he declares also, "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."—John 10:16.

THE SECOND FLOCK AND ITS FOLD

These other sheep of the Lord, we believe, will include all of mankind who, during the Millennial kingdom, will be glad to avail themselves of the great provision the Lord has made for them in his plan. They are other sheep in the sense that they will be of a different nature from the flock which the Lord is selecting during this Gospel age. The flock now being called and gathered are being begotten to the divine nature, a spirit nature, and they will attain to this spirit nature by a resurrection change; as it is written, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."—1 Cor. 15:50.

The other sheep will be the great flock of the Lord, the great family of Adam, purchased by Jesus. For a thousand years the work of calling and gathering mankind and separating between sheep and goats will progress, as outlined in Matthew 25:31-46. The whole world will be granted the opportunity of taking their choice as to whether they will be sheep or goats. And nothing in the Scriptures informs us whether the sheep or the goats will be the more numerous. We are merely informed that all will have the invitation to become the Lord's sheep, to come under his shepherding care; and by so doing and proving their loyalty to him and developing his spirit, his character-likeness, they will be granted everlasting life on the human plane, the earthly plane.

There the Lord will bring the restitution which St. Peter mentions (Acts 3:19-21), and which will be offered to Adam and all his race, who will not receive the call of this Gospel age. Theirs will not be so high a call, but will evidently be a glorious one. The whole earth—a Paradise, an earthly heaven—will be their everlasting portion, but it will not be the heavenly home to which the church has been invited. The world's blessing of restitution to human perfection, to the image and likeness of God in the flesh, will not be the equivalent of the spiritual nature granted to the church of this age, but it will be wonderfully grand.

As for the goats of that time, thank God! they are not to be tormented, as many of us once supposed. Rather, they are to be cut off from life, as is implied in the Greek word *kolasin*. "These [the goats] shall go away into everlasting cutting off; but the righteous [the sheep] into life everlasting." (Matthew 25:46) The Great Shepherd, who is now gathering his flock of this Gospel age, will remain therefore for a thousand years to gather out fully all his flock of the Millennial age, to separate them fully from all having the contrary spirit, and to destroy completely all except his sheep. All who really love righteousness and hate iniquity, when given a clear opportunity to discern and to take their stand, will choose the right and become the Lord's sheep. All others, who will to be wicked, will die; as it is written, "All the wicked will he destroy."—Psalm 145:20.

"I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and I will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment"—with a righteous recompense.—Verses 15, 16.

THE FLOCK CRITICIZED ALSO

Not merely the shepherds, the pastors, the preachers, the ministers, are reproved by the Lord, but also some of his flock not in official positions. In the Day of the Lord's presence, these also will be dealt with, as we read:

"And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they have eaten that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they have drunk that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God unto them, Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad, therefore will I save my flock, and they shall be no more a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle."—Verses 17-22.

The new order of things incidental to Messiah's kingdom is here brought to our attention. This already has begun in respect to the Gospel church. Some who have been considered quite prominent in Christendom, pushing and managing its affairs, and discounting the Lord's true sheep as peculiar people, will be reproved by the Lord in this day. The poor, the outcasts, the peculiar, are the ones that he styled his flock, and that he was to especially gather and especially feed and especially heal in this time. And is it not so? Is the Lord not feeding his sheep and blessing them irrespective of all sectarianism, and wherever they may be, in every land? Verily, he is searching them out and feeding them; and soon, the harvest time closed, these will be gathered to the heavenly fold. Meantime, the good work begun with the Gospel sheep will be extended amongst mankind.

Never again will the Lord leave his sheep without shepherding. We are not from this to understand that he made a mistake when he said, "If I go away, I will come again"; but rather that the leaving of his flock for a time was incidental to their testing, their proving, and development, that those loyal to the Lord, the principles of righteousness and the instructions of his Word might be manifested, even though they were scattered, and that others also might be manifested as unfaithful. It is, however, refreshing to know that throughout the entire Millennial age, until all the work of perfecting the sheep shall have been accomplished, the Shepherd will be with them. Thus we read:

"And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepherd. And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a Covenant of Peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods."—Verses 23-25.

We are not from this to understand that the Prophet David of old is to be made Jehovah's representative and given the care of the sheep in the future. The word David signifies beloved; and the thought, we believe, is that the antitype of David is meant. Jesus is preeminently beloved of the Father; and the bride class, the church, are to be the members of Christ, their Head—members of the Beloved. Thus the Lord Jesus said of his people, "The Father himself loveth you."

We see then that The Christ, Head and body—Jesus and the church—are to be the antitypical David, or Beloved of God, into whose care all who are His sheep or who desire to become his sheep during the Millennial age will be committed. The wild beasts, representing the evil-doers, those who will devour, destroy and do harm, will be caused to cease; and the whole world will become "the fold." No longer will there be need of making a special fold, building the fences against the enemies, for the sheep will be in a quiet and restful condition—"in the woods."

In other words, the close of the Millennium will witness what the Lord has declared, that nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all his holy kingdom. (Isaiah 11:9) It will witness also what Jesus has declared; namely, that from that time onward, there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, no more curse, because all the former things shall have passed away. "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:3-5) Even Satan shall be bound, to deceive the world no more until Messiah shall have fully accomplished the work of perfecting the flock.

INTERESTING LETTERS

RE CHARGES OF THE PREACHERS' UNION

DEAR BRETHREN:—

We appreciated very much the article in the March 15 WATCH TOWER entitled, "Preachers Back of Malicious Attack." Of course, all of us were certain that the charges were false, but until the article appeared we had nothing with which to refute the falsity of them. Now we are fully armed.

One would hardly believe that reports could spread so rapidly.

We find here in Texas that the opposition to the truth is so thoroughly organized throughout the country that every preacher, even in the smallest towns and in the rural districts, has in his possession copies, not only of all the books written in opposition to the truth, but also of the charges

made against Brother Russell and of our alleged teachings of a second chance, no punishment for sin, etc. In our volunteer work we are making it a point to refute these charges whenever opportunity presents.

We are not inclining toward weariness in well doing. We are confident that we shall reap unspeakably glorious results in due time, and we believe the due time is not far off.

It is our delight to bear before the throne of heavenly grace our dear Pastor and all others who suffer for righteousness' sake. And we daily search our own hearts lest possibly we may shrink from joyfully sharing with these whatever the Lord may allow to come upon us. With continued love and prayers for all, we are,

Faithfully yours in his fellowship and service,

SETH T. MOORE.—*Texas.*

OPPOSITION PROVED TO BE BOOMERANG

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

A short time ago, having heard your teachings roundly denounced by one or two brother clergymen, I obtained the six volumes of your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and began to study and investigate for myself. The final upshot of this inquiry has been that the whole of your views and position as set forth in the above volumes has convinced me beyond all question that modern Christendom is upon a false foundation, and that somehow the "churches" have lost vital integral portions of that truth which was delivered once for all to the saints. I have therefore recently felt it to be my duty to resign my position as an Angelican minister, as I am now certain that the "churches" as at present organized do not, and cannot, truly and adequately represent our Lord to humanity as Redeemer. Why this is so you make abundantly and transparently clear in your STUDIES.

I have been engaged in the work of the ministry for the last thirteen years, and during this time have tenaciously held on to my position in the church, although for some years I have had the instinctive feeling that in some way things were far from right within the borders of "Orthodoxy." The difficulty was I did not know how to set about to try and remedy matters. Your third volume of the STUDIES, "Thy Kingdom Come," shows clearly that there could be no remedy in these latter days, for the time of Harvest is come, and that the evident decay and disintegration of Christendom is the Lord's method of gathering together His own spiritual, elect church. The whole thing has come to me with the force of a divine revelation—for such it assuredly is. I can only add that it has been the deep desire within to try and do my Lord's will that has kept me within the "orthodox" church until the present. Now, however, that I see, as in a mirror, that He is calling me to come out of Babylon as with a stentorian voice—in view of her wickedness, worldliness, cruelty, hypocrisy and errors—I feel that I must obey Him at all costs. I have done this, and already I feel a sense of inner peace and tranquility coming over me. May God bless and keep you, Brother Russell, and all the brethren with you who are now busy making ready for the Coming of the King!

For myself I just want to do the Lord's will in all things, and will be glad to serve and co-operate with you and the Association generally as may most effectively tend to assist in the establishment of our Lord's kingdom. Kindly use me as you may judge will be best to this great end. I am a married man with three children, but whatever difficulties may arise I have already proved that his grace is sufficient for me. He has shown me the road to take to do his will and he will enable me so to do.

I have made myself known to the brethren in Toronto and they have welcomed me in a most kind and brotherly way. If it should be the Lord's will for me to remain in this city, it will be a joy and privilege to cooperate with them in seeking to further the great end we have in view. At the same time I have the feeling that if arrangements could be made for me to undertake a short, special course of study and training under your direction at Brooklyn it would do me much good and enable me to render more efficient service later on. I will, however, leave myself wholly in your hands and endeavor to begin to serve the Association as you may judge best.

With earnest prayers that your hands may be upheld in every possible way, and that God in his infinite mercy may shower upon you and the brethren generally still greater blessings for the great day yet to come, I am

Yours in the Lord, R. A. ROBINSON.—*Canada.*

BAPTIST PREACHER GETS LIGHT

DEAR PASTOR:—

I am constrained to acquaint you with the news that in God's hands you have been a means of blessing to us who were for some time spiritually cast down. I was aforetime a Baptist pastor and evangelist in England, earnest in my endeavors for the Gospel's sake, and had to suffer because I could not bend to those who thought they had the right to lay down the law. I felt that there was something lacking in their teachings and was in such perplexity that I drifted into indifference and unhappiness.

Heartily disgusted with the worldliness and "isms" of the churches, and worst of all their denial of God's Word, I involuntarily cried, "Send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me!" "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation!"

About this time my father mailed me a WATCH TOWER copy of THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, but I was so prejudiced—regarding you as one of the modern upstarts—that I relegated it to the bottom of my box, unread. Again I was presented with, this time, a bound copy of the same book! In curiosity I began to read, and my curiosity soon became deep interest and diligent Bible study and my prayer has been answered!

In God's power I have been able to interest others; my brother-in-law has joined in our studies and desires to add his testimony to mine in gratitude to God for your ministrations. May God continue to abundantly bless you in your noble and fearless proclamation of THE TRUTH.

As opportunity offers we do our little for the spread of present-day truths and have been blessed accordingly. True, we have had to endure misjudgment and misunderstanding, but we rejoice to be accounted worthy to suffer these things for him who endured so much for us.

Feeling sure that such testimony will gladden your heart, and rejoicingly awaiting the establishment of the Kingdom,

Gratefully yours in Christ, JOHN A. PERRY.—*Australia*

CONSPIRACY ARTICLE IN SWEDISH

Swedish friends will please note that we now have in stock Swedish B. S. M. No. 68 for use wherever Swedish ministers slander the Truth. Mention quantity you can use without waste—free.

VOL. XXXVI BROOKLYN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1915 No. 11

THE COMING STORM AND ITS GLORIOUS OUTCOME

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. . . . Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."—Psalm 107:29, 30, 43.

Psalm 107 seems to be prophetic, tracing to a considerable degree the experiences of the church of Christ throughout this Gospel age. It may be applied individually and also in a world-wide international way. The cause of all the trouble in the world is sin. There might be various ways of trying to remove the difficulty, but God in his wisdom arranged the one plan. He will permit sin to bring storms and difficulties of life so that humanity shall be tossed about, and thus learn to appreciate our great Savior, whom God has provided to be the Great Deliverer of the church and of the world. The whole matter has been arranged in a judicial manner, and in due time Christ will have the full right to bid all storms to cease and to bring order out of confusion. Yet this must await the divine appointment. During the present age the church class has been selected, and the storms and difficulties of life have been valuable to them in developing faith, hope, patience and in preparing them for the kingdom honors, privileges and opportunities.

The world's storms, according to the Scriptures, have been varied and have occurred at different times, according to the conditions of mankind—sin and selfishness always stirring up a storm on every possible occasion. There have been many storms in the past—wars, invasions, tumults, etc.—all started from envious, selfish motives, or because of great injustice on

the part of others. Great nations have envied one another their increase of wealth, and have preyed upon the weak. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, the works of the flesh and the devil, have been cultivated. Now, having sown thus to selfishness, mankind are experiencing a mighty whirlwind on the social sea. This great storm has not yet reached its height. Our thought is that it will be much greater before the Lord will step in and say, "Peace, be still!" He has permitted this awful storm; for he knows how to make it work out for the good of humanity.

It is ours as God's people to favor peace and righteousness and to live in harmony with these conditions. But it is ours also to know what is coming on the world—more, it is ours to know the outcome, to know something of God's truth. The Lord has already given us an inward peace which no outward storm can affect. We are trusting in the promises he has given. We realize what the present condition is, and rejoice that the church will soon be glorified. What a lasting peace and joy will then be ours beyond the veil! This realization brings into our hearts even now great rest of soul, a great calm! We remember that God is able to make all things work together for good to us, and he has promised so to do; therefore we may have blessed experiences coming out of these stormy times and trials of life.

The Lord has a peculiar way of bringing peace to his people —not usually by interference with people of the world. The storms of life may go on just the same as ever; our way may be just as thorny as ever. But the Lord speaks peace to us! We hear his voice, the Word of God! By the knowledge he gives us, by his precious promises, he assures us of his wisdom, his love, his power, and of his loving purpose for his people. These things give us peace and rest of heart in the midst of outward trials and trouble. He makes known to us also his great plan for the world in general. He informs us now of the significance of the present conditions and of the glorious outcome of the great trouble about to break upon the whole world.

THE LAST GREAT DAY

We are in the "last days" mentioned by the Apostle Paul. He says, "In the last days perilous times shall come. Men shall be . . . covetous, boasters, proud . . . traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God . . . From such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Our Lord Jesus repeatedly mentioned "the last day," and declared that certain things would occur in the last day. We understand him thus to be referring to the great seventh day, the thousand-year day of his kingdom. For instance, he said, in speaking of his disciples individually, "And I will raise him up at the last day."

The Scriptures speak of the last day as being the end of this present dispensation, the end of the present reign of evil. Our Lord referred to the closing days of this age when he said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man." All Scriptures referring to this day seem to point to the great commotion to come at this time. The Prophet Daniel seems to speak of the present dispensation as a "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." This was to be, he declared, "in the time of the end." Our Lord speaks of it: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matthew 24:21-25) St. Paul tells us that the fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is. The Apostle Peter describes it vividly in his second epistle. That day of trouble and the glory to follow are the theme of all the holy prophets.

The troubles of this day are not all of the same nature. Jesus tells us that some of his followers will be accounted worthy to escape the troubles coming upon the world, which St. Peter says will involve the whole earth. In the fire of that day, some who are children of God will be found to have built their house of wood, hay and stubble, even though building upon the true foundation, Christ. All their superstructure will be burned, and themselves "saved as by fire," as the Apostle Paul tells us. Others of the Lord's children will be found to have built upon the true foundation "gold, silver, and precious stones"; and thus their works will stand. They will have a superstructure of truth and loyalty to the Lord built upon the foundation, and this will not be burned. Their building will stand the "fire" of this great day.

As the Apostle Paul in all his epistles addressed himself to the saints in Christ Jesus, we understand these words (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) to refer only to those professing full consecration to the Lord, the church of Christ. The true saints must all suffer; for as St. Paul forewarned, we must "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) "Hereunto were we called," St. Peter assures us. (1 Peter 2:21) But all these things only work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if we are properly exercised thereby.

THE NOMINAL SYSTEMS OF TODAY

But, as already intimated, we find a very large class today professing to be of the church of Christ, and millions of money are being spent by these for the worship of God according to the ideas of the nominal church systems. Fine church edifices are built and dedicated to the Lord. Grand organs and trained choirs are furnished. Gymnasia, "smokers," culinary departments with dining-rooms, etc., are provided. These churches are supported by people a large number of whom are very noble in many respects.

From one viewpoint it would seem that people who are spending so much money every year for church purposes must be quite religious and very anxious to do God's will. We read of how many millions of dollars New York City spends annually for its ministers, churches, etc., etc. But we find, in fact, that in all these churches there is a great deal of formalism. Those who sing their hymns are hired to do so, and they say that they have no particular interest in religion, but are merely doing it for so many dollars. Not many of the ministers will acknowledge that their service is of much the same nature, but there are those who think that the majority of them are serving in a similar manner. Does the Lord recognize and accept such service? (See Amos 5:20-23; Isaiah 1:13-15) It is not for us to judge the heart; but on every side we find headiness, boastfulness, pride.

We do not know how the Apostle Paul could better have described present conditions if he had been living here today. If anything is said to these zealous workers in the churchianity of our day about the worldliness, pride and errors of the churches, there is a toss of the head, even though some of them acknowledge that there is much that they do not approve of. It is found necessary to have concerts, teas, frolics, etc., in the churches to raise money; for, it is claimed, if they did not have these things, nobody would come to church except the preachers and some who hold office, and who attend to perform the duties for which they are held responsible. One such church official said to the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER, "I am in duty bound to go to church so often, but I will get out of the office as soon as I can." Having had the duty of elder thrust upon him, he intended to escape from it as soon as possible.

THE PRESENT IDOL OF CHRISTENDOM

Money-love, acquisitiveness, seems to be the controlling factor today. True, many who have a great deal of money are giving it out by the millions of dollars; but ours is a money-loving day. And it is not merely the rich who have this love of money. We find it everywhere. The chief desire is to get money—not to lay it up in banks, but to spend it; people like the pleasures which money will buy. It is a money-spending time as well as a money-loving time. Pleasure holds riot today, and money is honored and everywhere sought. Our former superstitious ideas of the better blood of some than of others —"blue blood"—we in America have been largely relieved of. We have therefore not that love of aristocracy and so-called "noble birth" which prevails in the old world. People formerly believed that the kings and the nobility were of a different race altogether from the common people. But now love of money and of that which money will purchase—pleasure, power, influence—have driven the world mad. Money is worshipped as an idol. If one has money, he can get nearly anything he wants. Many such people have a form of godliness, without its power. The Apostle says, "From such turn away."—2 Timothy 3:4, 5.

This condition of things has grown by degrees. How shall we turn away from those who worship these false gods? We turn away in the sense that we do not follow in the same course. We keep our hearts from the love of pleasure and worldliness and from the greed of gain. We turn away from all these things, and go in a different direction. This seems to correspond with what the Lord says in Revelation 18:2, 4. When revealing to the Apostle John the condition of Nominal Zion, in our day, and speaking prophetically as though in our day, he says, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen . . . Come out of her, my people"—get out from under her influence, leave her! The Lord's true people are to follow the Lord's direction here. They are to stand free from this bondage to error and worldliness, and set a good example to others also; and then they are to wait for the Lord's further instructions and for the accomplishment of his glorious purposes. We need not hope at all to turn the tide—one man or a thousand men or a million men would be powerless to turn the tide of Babylon today. She is fallen; therefore forsake her!—Jeremiah 51:6-9.

OUR QUIET, CONFIDENT STRENGTH

God entered into his rest when his creative works were finished in the earth, so we, the true church, shall soon enter into our rest, the perfect rest beyond the veil. God has placed the whole matter in the hands of Christ to accomplish in the appointed time. We have confidence in the Lord and in his times and seasons; therefore we are very restful, and in coming out of Babylon we are not worried nor anxious and distressed about others. God will bring order out of all the prevailing confusion. All who will prove worthy of everlasting life will ultimately be glad to work in the way the Lord shall direct.

The world today is drunk with certain false doctrines, and do not know what they are doing. If we were with people who were hilarious, intoxicated, we would better not try to sober them up, but stop association with them. Yet there may be some in that company who would love to be as we—free to serve the Lord. It is our duty to help everybody who is feeling after the Lord and amenable in any degree to the Word of Truth. We are to do good to all men as we have opportunity, "especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10) It is to this end that we have been circulating the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, and holding meetings and showing THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, so that other earnest souls may, like ourselves, stand free from the general trend of our day and may live a life of sacrifice, and thus be prepared for the high exaltation coming to those who are faithful to God—a reward that we believe is now near at hand. Those who are thus prepared and panoplied with the whole armor of God will be kept in a condition of quietness and confidence known to no others in this great day of stress, turmoil and shaking.

PRESENT "SIGNS OF THE SON OF MAN"

The way by which the Lord informs his faithful, watching ones of the import of present conditions in the world and of the nearness of Christ's glorious reign, is through outward signs corroborating what we now see Bible chronology to indicate. A sign is an indication. The putting up of a baker's sign indicates that bread is to be bought there; a butcher's sign, that meat is for sale at that place, etc. Then we have the sign, or indication of coming storms, or fair weather. We are not to expect to see shining letters across the sky or anything of that kind to indicate the Lord's presence; but there has been a sign in the church for some time now—about forty years—the reaping of the ripe wheat. This has been a sign of the Parousia of the Son of Man. It has not been possible for the world to discern this sign. We also have the sign of the barren fig tree, the Jewish nation, putting forth its leaves. We see the foretold worldliness of the church systems. We see the beginning of the smiting of the nations.

When the great time of trouble shall break, the world will begin to see that a new order of things is somehow coming about; that a great change is impending. Conditions have not been so previously. As men see that the Son of Man is about to take his great power and that the Messianic kingdom is coming in, they will be apprehensive, not appreciating the fact that this kingdom is designed for the blessing of all. For a time they will not grasp the full situation. They will see the trouble, the paralysis of business, the distress of nations, socialism, anarchism, and their hearts will fail them for fear of the things approaching.

But all these things are now signs to us that the Lord is making ready to establish his kingdom and is preparing for the fall of the Gentile kingdom. This, however, will not at first be distinguishable to the world in general under the flaming fire of trouble. They will not know what to make of these things. We think that the majority of people are somewhat perplexed today. Men who are very prominent in social matters, financial matters, religious matters, are in great perplexity. Many of them are beginning to discuss the idea that the kingdom of God is really approaching.

We are told by some of our friends who attended the great Peace Meeting held here in New York City last fall that the prominent speakers participating, among them the Vice President of the United States, made numerous references to the Prince of Peace as being just at the door. The Millennium was referred to in like manner. We do not know what this means, except that they think that the Son of Man is now coming in his kingdom. We think that their perplexity will increase as they see still greater stress—financial stress, social stress—and as we enter the great time of trouble, "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." A Hebrew gentleman was telling the Editor that the Jews in Jerusalem are starving to death. To the four millions of Jews living in Galicia and Austria it seems to make no difference whether one army or the other passes through the country; for the Jews always suffer. Wherever the armies have marched, the homes have been devastated and the land laid waste. Recently the Jews have held a Mass Meeting in New York to collect money for their brethren in Galicia and in Palestine.

If any of you should meet a banker, should you engage in conversation with him, you will see his face grow very sober. In some instances the tears will come into his eyes when speaking of the alarming conditions in finance today. Many wealthy people will say that when this war broke out they were worth a hundred thousand dollars, but that they do not now know what they are worth. Their stocks and bonds are not salable. So there is today a trouble that reaches increasingly throughout the earth, affecting not only all Christendom, but heathendom as well.

VIEW FROM CLEFT IN THE ROCK

As our own eyes of understanding have opened, we have sought to show to the church, and to the world as far as possible, the great divine plan of the ages—wonderful, beautiful, far superior to anything human! Bible students the world over are reading the Bible and the signs of the times in a new light; for God's own time has come for lifting the veil of ignorance and darkness which for so long he has permitted Satan to put before our eyes. To our understanding the present war is pictured in the Bible, as due to begin in 1914. It is a great "wind."

Following the great war, the Bible teaches, a great earthquake—social revolution—will take place. In connection with that earthquake will come an exaltation of religious sects, Catholic and Protestant, on the side of the kings and princes—political, social, financial, religious. Next will come the downfall of all present religious systems. Speedily the symbolic "fire" of the Bible will consume the earth—anarchy. Following the anarchy quickly will come the long-promised kingdom of God, for which Christians have prayed, saying, "Thy kingdom come," most of them with but little conception of the true meaning of their words. During the reign of that kingdom, "a still small voice," the message of truth and grace, will come to all mankind. The world's uplift will progress; and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall gradually fill the whole earth. The longed-for haven of rest will then be attained, "the desire of all nations."

"MY SHEEP HEAR"—AND FOLLOW

All the true disciples of Jesus will see and hear in this present "due time." "My sheep hear my voice," said the Master. If any, therefore, are in Babylon and do not hear the voice of the Lord now calling them out of this great apostate system, our plain inference is that they are not his true sheep. This does not mean that all will hear at the same moment. Some are dull of hearing; they may not be living very near to the Lord. But so surely as they are his sheep they will hear; and so surely as they are following in his steps they will hear clearly, and obey promptly. They will be eager to come out of Babylon before her plagues come like a deluge, as they will soon come. We who now have the light should hold up the Lord's message and point other Christians to the present condition of things, and let them hear the Lord and then make their decision.

"PLAGUES" UPON BABYLON

The "seven last plagues" to be visited especially upon Christendom do not mean a particular disease, as the black plague or cholera; but the word stands for trouble. The Scriptures indicate what these are—death, famine, revolution, distress, overthrow. These distresses will be both physical and mental. It will be a great trouble and distress to Babylon when she realizes that her walls are fallen. She has realized for some time that there was danger of a collapse, and has been seeking to repel anything that might come near to injure her walls. Many good people have been fighting for these denominations, thinking that they represent the Lord's people—being themselves bound more or less by the institutions of the present time.

We do not think that the Gospel age fully ended in September, 1914, but merely the Times of the Gentiles. The Gospel age will not fully end, we believe, until the Gospel message ends; and that will be when the door is shut, when the last member of the very elect shall have passed beyond the veil. It is our understanding that the elect church of Christ, the bride, will not remain in the flesh to do much of the teaching of the world, but will be glorified in the kingdom either before or during the great time of trouble, and be ready to supervise the world's instruction from the spirit plane. The great conflict is before us. The Prophet Isaiah (63:1-6) depicts in very strong language the work of our Lord Jesus among the nations

at this time and in the days just ahead. "He hath trodden the wine-press alone, and all his garments are stained with blood." the wrath of God. See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 4, pp. 18, 19, and p. 51, ¶ 1. We believe that this work has already begun in the present European war, which is growing in severity and awfulness day by day.

After the church shall have been glorified beyond the veil, the ancient worthies are to be her representatives in the world, taking oversight of the instruction of the peoples and ruling in human affairs; after the Messiah has commanded "Peace" to the angry nations and bidden the raging billows be calm. But there may be yet for a little while—just how long we cannot surely know—some work for the church to do for the world this side the veil, before the time of trouble fully sets in, or at the time of its beginning. If so, we believe that this instruction to the world is now in progress.

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord," even though for a brief space his righteous sword shall be unsheathed for the punishment of iniquity and the overthrow of Satan's great empire.

FAITH THE MAINSPRING OF CONSECRATION

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He is faithful that promised."—Hebrews 10:23.

The Apostle is here writing to some in the early church who had given evidence of wavering, who were failing properly to hold on. He is telling them that while they had been faithful at one time they apparently had become lukewarm at least, respecting the Lord and the Christian way. He intimates that the firmness of faith in the child of God, and the firmness with which he holds the profession of his faith, has much to do with his consistency in Christian life. Our faith was the manspring that led each of us to make a consecration to the Lord. We believed that God had provided the Redeemer for the forgiveness of sin. We believed that we would be acceptable and our sins forgiven through the Lord Jesus Christ; and that we would be made sons of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus. These were the inspiring incentives that first led us to God. They served a good purpose in leading us to the decisive step.

St. Paul says that these Hebrew Christians had witnessed a good profession; but some of them, at least, had been growing more or less indifferent. He declares that although by this time they should have been teachers, they needed to themselves be taught again what were "the first principles of the oracles of God." They had lost part of their faith, their assurance in the Lord.

We all know from experience how things that are brought before our minds may afterwards become dim and hazy. When spiritual things become thus hazy, when we cannot grasp spiritual verities as once we could, when we are fearful and our joy in Christ is fading, we are getting away from this mainspring of our consecration. We are losing our faith. So let us earnestly hold fast to this anchor of our souls lest we drift and be dashed upon the rocks. Unless we do hold fast to our faith we shall lose everything; for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Without faith it would be impossible to gird on the armor and go forth to fight the good fight. We would never go out to a battle that we did not believe existed, or to a battle that we did not believe would bring any results, any reward for the hardships and suffering involved.

OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Apostle's argument is that we should hold fast the faith which began our Christian life and which is also to be the finisher of our Christian life. The Lord is able to carry us through and he will do it, if we do our part. But the terms on which the Lord has received us are that we purpose to abide faithful. Hence everything depends on our holding fast to this faith which we have professed, without wavering, without harboring any doubts and fears; and the basis of our faith in our ultimate triumph is the assurance that "he is faithful that promised." We know that in the Bible there are "exceeding great and precious promises" for us. While the Lord tells us that there is nothing in ourselves that we can depend on, he assures us that his grace is sufficient, that his strength is made perfect in our weakness. We have only to lay hold upon it. If therefore we hold fast to our faith, we may obtain all that God has promised us. He will be faithful; he will not disregard his promises; he will do all that he has said.

If we hesitate and waver we are either losing our faith or losing the spirit of obedience and love. If, therefore, we realize that either of these conditions exists, we should go at once to the Word of God and to prayer, that our faith, love and zeal may be renewed. We should scrutinize our hearts day by day, to make sure that we are still loyal to the Lord, to see whether we are seeking to lay down our lives according to our covenant, to see whether we are developing the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. Thus we shall fulfil our vows, and there shall be "an abundant entrance" administered unto us into the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

"Awake, my soul, awake!
The precious days are flying!
Yield not to ease nor sloth,
The far-spent day is dying.

"Up, and gird on thy Sword!
Didst dream the battle ended?
The last fight's on—and no such Cause
Was ever yet defended!

"Not yet, but soon, the Prize—
One last, supreme endeavor
Is thine, and then the Crown,
The bliss, the joy, forever!"

GENTLENESS A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CHRIST

"The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."—2 Timothy 2:24, 25.

The words of our text were addressed by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, an elder of the church. The Lord's people, all who belong to the body of Christ, are sons of God; nevertheless, they are all servants—bond-servants of Jesus Christ. Every true son would desire to serve the interests of his father, especially a just, loving father; and every faithful servant would wish to serve the interests of his master or his employer, particularly a noble, worthy employer or master. Our Lord Jesus, who was the special Son of the Heavenly Father, made himself servant of all, in order that he might serve the Father's interests, accomplish his will.

Our text is applicable to any servant of God, any member of the church of Christ, whether he holds office among the brethren or not. It is an injunction which applies to all of the church. Every spirit-begotten child of God is to teach according to his opportunity and ability, under the limitations of sex, etc., given in the Scriptures. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isaiah 61:1) These words of the Prophet apply to every member of The Christ, Head and body.

PROPER MANNER OF PRESENTING THE TRUTH

But the message of the Good Tidings that the Lord has given us to proclaim is not one to be forced upon people. To be proper servants of the Lord, and in harmony with his arrangements, we must not strive, must not argue or quarrel. In meekness we are to instruct, not with an air of superiority, or a desire to show how much we know. Our message is for those who have "an ear to hear." We are not to force ourselves upon people, not to intrude upon them, in order to make them hear. While we are to be ready to sacrifice our own interests to proclaim the message of our faith, yet in so doing we are not to be strifeful, malicious or contentious.

We would not say of those who are inclined to be contentious in presenting the truth that they are not members of Christ, but evidently they have not learned the better way. They have not sufficiently developed the quality of love; they are lacking in heavenly wisdom in this respect. On one occasion two of our Lord's disciples came from a city of Samaria, the inhabitants of which would not sell them food, and indignantly asked of Jesus whether they should call fire down from heaven to destroy them. In reply our Lord said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." (Luke 9:55, 56)

So there are some today who are ready to quarrel on every occasion. Although this tendency does not prove that they are not children of the Lord, nevertheless, it demonstrates that they are not in the right attitude, that improvement is necessary.

The things pleasing to God are inculcated in the Scriptures. The Lord's followers are to be gentle to all men—not only to the brethren in the church, but to all others. They are not to be strife-breeders, not always getting into a wrangle, but long-suffering, considerate of the opinions and preferences of others. There may be times when a Christian is put into a position where he will be forced to defend himself; but it is one thing to defend one's self in a reasonable way, and quite another to be strifeful and aggressive.

In endeavoring to carry the truth to others, we should remember that our faith is not to be presented to everybody. "Cast not your pearls before swine." They will not appreciate your pearls. They will wish to do you injury because of not appreciating them. But while not strifeful, we are to be on the alert to hold forth the Word of Life. If the truth is attacked and honest souls are in danger of being stumbled, we must, as the Apostle enjoined, "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3) This does not mean, however, that we are to be quarrelsome, or to be disputatious, in the ordinarily accepted use of those terms. We are to be ever ready to proclaim the truth on every suitable occasion—with moderation, meekness and humility, but with earnestness and zeal; for this is our business. If those to whom we present the message of truth are in the proper attitude, they will desire it. It is right, therefore, for us to be ready to lay down our lives in defense of the truth and its interests.

The more cool, calm and self-possessed we are when opposed, the better we can defend and recommend the message we bear. The greater the contrast between our spirit and that of our opposer, the stronger will be our argument for the truth in the minds of others who may hear; and the more likely shall we be to disarm prejudice in the mind of the opposing one, if he be sincere and honest of heart. One who loses his self-control and becomes combative and disputatious defeats his own cause. One should never lose his head. He will be sure to say things that were better left unsaid and to manifest by tone and manner that he is not actuated by the Spirit of the Master. More harm than good might result from such a mistake. We are always to present the message gently, kindly, forcefully. It may be necessary to be positive in our statements, but the spirit of the presentation is to be gentle, whether in private or in public.

QUALIFICATION OF A TRUE TEACHER

The Apostle says that the servants of the Lord should be "apt to teach." (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:24) St. Paul was here especially addressing an elder in the ecclesia. To be apt to teach is to have the teaching ability. Not all have the ability, the gift, of making things plain to others. There are some people who the more they say the less they are understood. If there are some who find themselves in this condition, they should use printed matter and then try to learn to present the message in a way that will be assimilable to the minds of others—making it clear, plain and logical. In the presentation of the message to others patience is necessary. Be willing to go over the point again and again, having sympathy with those you are instructing, remembering how difficult you found it when you were trying to emerge from darkness into the light.

Whether presenting the truth publicly or in private, never assume an air of superiority, never manifest haughtiness. Never allow yourself to become so irritated as to say, "I know more about this in five minutes than you do in a year"; nor even imply this thought in the expression of your face, or in tone or manner. You see, you can express yourself in these four different ways at once; but any one of the four would be sufficient to place a barrier between yourself and those whom you were endeavoring to interest. You are to be meek, lowly of heart, humble.

If some one presents to you an argument or a Scripture that he thinks contradicts your position, say to him, "Well, brother, let us see whether that is in harmony with the teachings of the Bible. We must accept as truth only that which will harmonize all the statements of the Word of God. Let us prove the matter." Have a meek, teachable manner, one which shows that you are willing to learn from another if he can teach you something from the sure Word of the Lord. Thus your opponent will be more willing to hear what you have to say, if he is disposed to be at all reasonable.

Undoubtedly the Lord's people are learning more and more the lesson inculcated in our text—"the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all." It is a lesson that all must learn, elders and deacons and every member of the body of Christ. It is necessary to our own character-building, and necessary in order that we may do more effective service for the Master. When at first we buckled on the armor and took up the sword of the Spirit, we probably did some flourishing, and perhaps often did more harm than good. We felt that we had something that no one could argue down. But we have been learning to be more gentle, more wise, more patient, more loving; and thus we have become better qualified to be instructors of others. We have seen how we may injure the cause of the Lord by a wrong presentation of the truth, and how by proper presentation we may become more successful in doing the Lord's work, in reaching hungry hearts, and more pleasing to our great King, whom we all love and long to serve.

"WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?"

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."—Matthew 22:39.

These words were quoted by our Lord in his summarizing of the Ten Commandments. Dividing the Ten Commandments into two parts, he showed that one part related to the duty and obligation toward God, and the other to the duty and obligation toward fellowmen, toward the neighbor. The first part calls for all the love of our heart, our being, our mind, our strength, for the Lord and his service; and the second part, which relates to humanity, calls for us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

In a special sense the Jews recognized themselves as being God's people. Therefore under the law they recognized each other as neighbors; for they were all the people of the Lord. But they thought that while they should cordially love their neighbors, they should hate their enemies—all the outside nations that God did not recognize. However, the fact that God had in the past commanded them to slay or drive out the surrounding nations did not mean that the Jews should hate them and wish to do them real injury. Our Lord seems to indicate that the Jews had taken a wrong view of matters. He taught them that to love their enemies, and to do good to those who persecuted them, was the better way. He showed them that they should have a broad view, a benevolence that would take in all the world.

To this effect he on one occasion gave them a parable—that of the Good Samaritan. In that parable he pictured a man who was not a Jew ministering to a Jew who had been injured. A Jewish priest had seen the wounded man and had passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, not so close in relationship to God as the priest, is represented as looking at the man and then also passing on the other side. Then came this stranger, a Samaritan, one not in relationship to God at all. The Samaritan promptly served the injured man—anointed him and bound up his wounds. The man had been assaulted, robbed and maltreated. The Samaritan "set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him." He remained over night with the injured man, and when he left in the morning he gave some money to the inn-keeper and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." (Luke 10:29-35) Jesus declared that in this Samaritan of the parable they had an example of one who was a real neighbor.

This parable is also for our instruction today. If we appreciate the conception of a true neighbor which our Lord gave, and say that we have the same conception, then let us observe this Golden Rule: Whatsoever I would have you do unto me, let me do even so unto you. And if you feel that if you were on the roadside, plundered and injured by highwaymen, you would wish that some one would help you, then do the same to others, if you have opportunity. And so in all things. From this viewpoint the whole world are neighbors, no matter how far apart they are—whether they live on our side of the earth or on the opposite side. This the broad, general view shows our relationship and obligation to all the world, to one the same as another. All are our neighbors. All should be treated in a neighborly way as we have opportunity. There is no exception.

It will not do to say that one should be kind merely to those who have been kind to him, that to such only are we to act the part of a neighbor. In that event, the Samaritan would not have been the neighbor. He might have thought that as no-

body had found him by the wayside and done anything for him, he consequently would not do anything either. The Lord, in this parable, and in his statement of the spirit of the law as related to our fellow-men, was laying down a principle that all should be neighbors and treat each other in a kind, neighborly manner, which is the only proper rule amongst mankind. We are to express our love for our neighbor by being thoughtful and considerate of his welfare and interests, and helpful to him as far as is in our power, other obligations being considered.

When we come to the church, there is a special relationship and bond between its members. We are to love one another as Jesus loved us. This is a new commandment. The Golden Rule is not a new commandment; for it properly belonged to man when God created him, and is designed to be the rule of life. The Jewish law, as it related to the attitude of the people of Israel toward one another, had for its essence the Golden Rule. But Jesus said to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you." He meant this: Those who have become new creatures have a new relationship; they belong to a new family—the family of God.

Our brethren on the spirit plane are nearest to us of any. Whoever is a new creature, and thus a brother to all those who are new creatures, is not merely to observe the Golden Rule, but is to be ready to do toward any and all of the brethren as Jesus did; namely, to lay down his life for them. He is not to say, "I would lay down my life for him, and so I expect him to be willing to lay down his life for me." No! Regardless of his own interests and life, regardless of what others do or do not for him, he is to be willing to spend and be spent for the blessing of the brethren. He is to have sacrificial love, which goes beyond the Golden Rule. Thus are we to be true disciples.

THANKLESS, REBELLIOUS ABSALOM

JULY 4.—2 SAMUEL 18:1-15.

THE STORY OF ABSALOM—HOW DIFFERENT FROM HIS FATHER—HIS WASTED OPPORTUNITIES—HIS CONTEMPTIBLE END AS A TRAITOR AND DISOBEDIENT SON WHO SOUGHT HIS FATHER'S LIFE—THE BOY THE FATHER OF THE MAN—THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS—THE CHILD WHAT THE PARENTS MAKE HIM—EUGENICS NOT SUFFICIENT.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right."—Ephesians 6:1.

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!"

Our study today discusses the death of Absalom. It is sufficiently explicit without comment. It will be of value to us, however, to look backward along the life of this young prince and to note some of his failures. In the first place, he was not well-born. His mother, King David's wife, was the daughter of a heathen king nearby. His mother may have been beautiful, probably was; for the Scriptures indicate the Absolom was a beautiful boy, a beautiful young man, having a fine, courteous manner and being a popular idol. He had the disadvantage of being a member of the royal family and not being required to labor with sweat of face.

Absalom is first brought prominently to our attention by his murder of his half-brother Amnon, to avenge his sister's honor. For this he fled to the protection of his grandfather. He was thus still further removed from any good influences associated with his father and with the true religion. After several years' absence, his father, who had never ceased to love him and mourn him, was induced to invite Absalom back to Jerusalem—where for two years more, he declined to receive his son into his presence. All of these influences were unfavorable to the young man, but none of them can excuse his treachery to his father, Israel's king.

ABSALOM'S CONSPIRACY

There were judges throughout the Land of Israel for the deciding of the ordinary causes of discontent; but when their decisions were unsatisfactory, appeal was made to the king as to a superior court. King David was busily engaged in preparing the materials for the Temple, which was not to be built until after his death. This may to some extent have hindered him from his work for the people as a superior judge, so that some of their cases, as in every superior court, were delayed of a hearing—tediously, it seemed to those impatient for desired results.

We are not sure, however, that there was anything lacking on King David's part as respects the administration of justice. We merely know that his crafty son, Absalom, made himself very popular. He was very gracious to the people, very familiar with them, always ready to hear their complaints; and he answered them very cunningly, expressing sorrow for their delay, and saying, Would that I were king! It would be different! Thus by deception, by intrigue, by falsehood, we read, he "stole the hearts of the people" from his father. The people really began to think that if they had such a man for a king, they would be immensely better off. They seemed to have overlooked entirely the fact that God was the King of Israel; and that, as the Bible says, King David merely sat upon the Throne of the Lord.—1 Chron. 29:23.

Absalom was spectacular, a beautiful prince, with long, wavy hair. He rode in his chariot; and before him were fifty swift runners, his heralds. The thoughtless people admired this; and, apparently, at least one wise man was drawn away by the infectious infatuation of this glitter.

Absalom knew of his father's religious sentiments, which apparently he did not at all share. He realized that he would not probably be his father's choice for a successor; and that the time for a new king was not so very far off, as King David was becoming aged. Following Satan's course of ambition and disloyalty to God, Absolom became disloyal to his father. He recruited an army, proclaimed himself king, and did the matter so quickly and so thoroughly, with the sympathy of so many people whose hearts he had stolen, that King David and his regular army and the loyal ones of his court were obliged to flee for their lives. Our lesson recounts the battle which was fought between the superior forces of Absalom and the smaller forces of King David, who, however, were better trained soldiers. The victory came to King David. Absalom was slain, notwithstanding David's urgent request of his soldiers that they should not kill the young man, his son.

What a contrast we have here between the man after God's own heart and the man whom the people admired—the flashy, the showy, the ambitious, the deceitful, the intriguing, the rebellious, who sought his father's life! The man of God, notwithstanding his weaknesses, which were acknowledged, and repented of, had a heart of loyalty to God, true as the needle to the pole; and he had a sympathetic love for his son which found expression in that notable dirge, "O Absalom, my son, my son, would God I had died for thee!"

A VERY IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE

The human will is wonderful, so that we might almost say that each boy is responsible for his own career. Our expression, a self-made man, is therefore not far wrong.

This, however, does not excuse the parent whose duty it is to see that a proper child is born into the world, reasonably gifted—not merely outwardly beautiful, but conscientious, just, loyal to God and to the principles of righteousness. Nor does it excuse the parent from giving the child proper conceptions of life, proper instruction; for the Scriptures say, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."—Proverbs 22:6.

It seems pitiful indeed that, with all the preaching and teaching of centuries, so few parents realize their obligations toward the children they bring into the world. So few fathers realize that they are the protectors and caretakers of their wives and of their off-spring; and that not only is it their duty and privilege to select a noble, conscientious wife to be the mother of the family, but it is also their duty to place her under favorable conditions during the period of gestation, and generally to assist her to keep her mind and her heart pure, loving, noble, loyal to God and to righteous principles, to the intent that their child may be well birthmarked, of noble character—less seriously marked and blemished with sin than would otherwise be the case. Well do the Scriptures declare that the people perish for lack of knowledge.—Hosea 4:6.

True, we have eugenics thrust upon our attention everywhere; but to what purpose? Important as this teaching is in respect to health and proper choice of a life-companion, it sinks into insignificance in comparison to the principle we are noting; namely, that the mind of the mother during the period of gestation is stamping and impressing, favorably or unfavorably, the character of her child. It of course would not be possible for a mother to produce a perfect child; but with her own ideals high and true and unwavering, fixed upon things pure, noble and good, we know beyond question that her child would thus be greatly benefited both physically and intellectually, and also morally. On the other hand, as we have pointed out in the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, the perfect mother, Eve, could and did mark her son Cain with a jealous, unhappy disposition, which eventuated in his murdering his brother.

SOLOMON, KING OF ISRAEL

JULY 11.—1 KINGS 1:1—2:12.

KING DAVID AGED—A FRESH REVOLT BREWING—SOLOMON CALLED TO THE THRONE OF ISRAEL—HIS ANOINTING AS THE LORD'S CHOICE—THE APPROVAL OF THE MULTITUDE—THE MEANING OF HIS NAME—HIS NATURAL ADVANTAGES AND PREPARATION FOR HIS HONORS.

"Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind."—1 Chronicles 28:9.

King David was seventy years of age; Absalom, his eldest son, had died in rebellion not long before the present lesson opens. David's next oldest son was Adonijah, whom the death of Absalom had made the heir-apparent to the throne, and who is supposed to have been between thirty and forty years of age at this time. Joab, for a long time the head of David's army, must have been well-advanced in years too, and probably was on the retired list, not merely on account of age, but because he had deeply wounded King David's feelings in disregarding his instructions that Absalom's life should not be taken.

Adonijah thought the time ripe for him to proclaim himself king, and especially as he had succeeded in gaining the friendship of Joab, the long-time military leader, and the friendship, too, of one of the prominent priests. He made a feast, to which were invited, apparently, all of King David's sons except Solomon, who was ostensibly known to be more or less a favorite with his father. The feast was held not far from Jerusalem, and the arrangement was made that in the midst of the feast one of the company should salute Adonijah as king. The others of his company were expected to echo the sentiment; and thus the movement would seemingly be a popular one and not a rebellion. It carried out much as planned thus far.

However, in God's providence, the matter was brought to the notice of King David, who promptly made the arrangement with the new general, Benaiah, with Nathan the Prophet, and with Zadok the priest, to have Solomon immediately placed upon the king's white mule, as a sign that the king had approved him as his successor. Then he was anointed in the name of the Lord; and forthwith the military salute was given, and the people of the whole city of Jerusalem shouted their joy, "Long live King Solomon." Next in turn, by King David's direction, King Solomon was brought to the throne and publicly crowned.

Adonijah, whose plans seemed to be working thoroughly, was astounded, and so were those with him, when they heard the clamor of the people, blowing of horns, etc., and later learned that it meant that Solomon had been crowned and enthroned. Adonijah feared for his life and fled; and his adherents melted away. Later, however, Solomon sent word to his brother Adonijah, assuring him of peace.

Thus beautifully King David's public career ended, not in an eclipse, but at his zenith, in his full maturity of old age, and in his perpetuation upon the throne in the person of his chosen son. To him may well be applied the poet's words:

"He sets as sets the morning star,
Which goes not down behind the darkened west.
Nor hides obscured amid the tempests of the sky,
But melts away into the light of heaven."

SOLOMON, SON OF PEACE

Solomon's name has come to signify wisdom, but originally, primarily, it meant peaceful. It surely was a prophecy of his wonderful life, in which was no war.

Solomon was the son of Bathsheba, after she had legally become David's wife. Somehow, not explained, the Lord had revealed to David that Solomon was to be his successor, and David had promised Bathsheba to this effect. Solomon was born at a period when King David's activities as a warrior had very nearly closed and when the great double sin of King David's life and his repentance from it had, we believe, wonderfully moderated and chastened him. His loyalty to God in this serious matter, his earnest prayer for forgiveness and his realization of peace from God, apparently had made a new man of King David. Even though before this he had been loyal to God, he apparently was now still more devoted. The peace which he craved, and which was a mark of divine forgiveness, may have had something to do with the gentle and thoughtful character of King Solomon, and something also perhaps to do with his name. It may have been given him as signifying that his birth marked peace with God on the part of his parents.

In any event, in Solomon we perceive a different character from that manifested by any of his brethren whose histories are recorded. He partook of his father David's religious disposition more than the others. He was thus highly favored, and really probably more gifted. Truly it is time for us to estimate to what extent others and ourselves are handicapped or blessed by dispositions and character-traits which we inherit.

Another thing favorable to Solomon would appear to have been the fact that his mother was not of a heathen family, but an Israelite, and therefore more in sympathy with the divine arrangement, law, worship, etc., than others of David's wives.

Additionally, the record seems to show that King David, having in mind a successor to his throne, and perhaps by that time having realized that he had not done his full duty by his other children in allowing them to grow up under the adverse influences of the court, rectified the matter in the case of Solomon while he was still young, leaving him partly in his mother's care, and appointing him as the ward and pupil of the Prophet Nathan. This excellert start in life doubtless had much to do with Solomon's career, which we shall examine in our next Study.

DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE WORD TEMPTATION

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust [desire] and enticed."—James 1:13, 14.

Many people—and particularly those of oriental countries—have within them a fatalistic tendency; as, for instance, the Mohammedans would be inclined to say respecting any calamity that came upon them, "It is of God," and simply submit themselves and make no further effort. These people would be inclined to have a similar attitude in respect to sin, and to say, "It is God's will that I should do wrong; and I am not, therefore, blameworthy. If his will is that I should sin, I will sin. If his will is that I should bear the marks of sin, I will bear the marks of sin." This is a grave error. God tempts no man to sin.

It is, of course, quite proper that we should recognize God's hand in his dealings with us and should be very submissive. But the Apostle points out that temptations are not of God, but of one's self. Many Christians are inclined to take the opposite standpoint of the Orientals and say, "There are no temptations from God; hence all our temptations are from the adversary."

But the Apostle James points out that our temptations are the result of our own natural desires and weaknesses. These are stimulated from without—often from our companions and associates in life. All about us there are examples and influences toward evil, in various forms—enticements. These might be charged back primarily to Satan; for all sin entered into the world by him. Satan had to do with the beguilement of our first parents, and so had to do with the introduction of sin. And Satan and his demon hosts now operate, as far as possible, in conjunction with out weaknesses. But this does not clear us of personal responsibility; for none of these have power to coerce our wills. Our responsibility may vary according to the natural strength or weakness of our character. Therefore we are to "judge nothing before the time." It is a matter that God alone can fully judge—as to how much one can overcome.

God's people are to realize, then, that no temptation is of God; and, resisting temptation, they will be on God's side. They are to be overcomers of temptation, resisters of temptation, whether from within, or from the adversary, or from the weaknesses of others, which might lead them into sin, into things contrary to God's will.

The Apostle says that God tempteth no man. If we should think of God as tempting us to sin, it would be a horrible thought; for by reason of his power, none could resist what he brought to bear upon us, and we would surely be overcome. But when we know that our temptations are not from God, we know that he will help us and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but that he will, with every temptation, provide a way of escape. He will protect us according to his promise, as we need protection and assistance. With this thought in our minds, we can be strong.

HOW GOD TEMPTED ABRAHAM

When we look back into the Old Testament, we read that "God did tempt Abraham," saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, . . . and offer him for a burnt offering." The question arises, How shall we reconcile this statement, "God did tempt Abraham," with the statement of the Apostle that God "tempteth no man"? The reply is that St. James in our text is limiting the word temptation to temptations to evil. God tempts us to do good. He sets before us the "exceeding great and precious promises," the wonderful

promises he has made to us. They act as magnets drawing us, as we might say. In this sense of the word we are tempted of God. But God does not tempt us to do evil, to commit sin. God tempted Abraham, tested him, not with a view to do him harm, but with a view to doing him good; and because Abraham stood the test God could accord to him the greater blessings. And he did so! He gave him great blessings in this life, as well as a promise of greater blessings to be his in the life to come, in the resurrection.

The test for Abraham was that he should offer in sacrifice his son Isaac, in whom centered all the promises. By his prompt obedience Abraham gave proof of his loyalty. He accounted that God was able even to raise his son from the dead, that the promises might be fulfilled. (Hebrews 11:18, 19) When his loyalty had been tested to the limit ,when the knife was raised to slay his son, the Lord through the angel stayed his hand and provided him with a ram for a sacrifice.

WHY GOD CANNOT BE TEMPTED TO EVIL

The further statement of our text is that God cannot himself be tempted by evil. We inquire how this is. We remember that our Lord Jesus was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners"; but that he "was in all points tempted like as we [his disciples] are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 7:26; 4:15) If Jesus was thus holy and fully in accord with the Father, and the Father cannot be tempted, how could Jesus be tempted? We answer, Our Lord was perfect in the flesh, perfect as a human being. But humanity has its limitations of knowledge and of endurance. The human brain and the human body are not adapted to know everything or to bear everything. This is one reason why God does not tell us everything. We must walk by faith. The man who is begotten of the holy Spirit, and who is able to understand many of the deep things of God, cannot appreciate all of the eternal things; for they are beyond his grasp.

We might take, for illustration, a dog, a very wise dog, capable of carrying out our directions to a considerable extent. Yet, if we should try to talk to a dog about trigonometry, or higher mathematics in any form, or about astronomy, he would be—we could not say bewildered, but—unable to understand at all. And so between humanity and God there is a wide gulf. It is not possible for humanity to grasp all the parts, all the details, of the divine plan. Even with the begettal of the holy Spirit we see things "through a glass darkly," and not face to face, the Apostle tells us. We shall, when perfected on the divine plane, behold things fully, completely; we shall see from God's standpoint.

OUR LORD'S TEMPTATION

So our Lord Jesus, naturally perfect as a man, at baptism was begotten of the holy Spirit and became a new creature; but that new creature lived in and operated through the human body; and so long as he was in the flesh, Jesus was subject to limitations. He was also surrounded by imperfect beings, their desires, their views, their imperfections. In order to sacrifice the earthly interests, then, he would need much faith. Therefore, he had severe trials of obedience to God, of faith in God. He was not tempted because of sin or weakness; for he had neither sin nor weakness. He was not tempted in the same respects as a natural man would be; for he was not like a natural man——he was spirit-begotten. He was tempted in respect to his obedience to God, in respect to trust in the Father's providential care. And we are tempted in like manner, for our development, that we may faithfully lay down our lives, may gladly give up the things that are seen, that we may attain to the things not seen.

In respect to strength and knowledge, our Lord as a man was evidently different from the Father. The Father could always know at once the good from the evil, and is not weak in any sense of the word—to be tempted by anything—is strong to carry out his own will, having no inclination whatever to sin, but a repugnance to it. Infinite strength dwells in God. Because our Lord Jesus assumed the same attitude toward sin, we read of him: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Psalm 45:7; Hebrews 1:9) All of the brethren of the Lord Jesus must take the same stand everywhere regarding sin, and especially sin in ourselves, and the tendency toward sin in us. A continual battle is going on in the Lord's disciples as they endeavor to follow his example.

So then, God tempts no man, neither is he tempted of any, to sin. He cannot be tempted of evil. Evil can have no influence with him. Our Lord Jesus is now in that condition where he cannot be tempted. He is of the divine nature, and perfect in power. And so when we shall have reached this same condition by the resurrection "change," we shall likewise not be subject to evil or temptation. We shall have perfect power, and shall be in full accord with that which is right, that which is of God.

THE FATHER'S WISE COUNSEL

"My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."—Proverbs 23:26.

Solomon, the wise man, had many wives; we may therefore reasonably suppose that he had sons. Yet to suppose that he addressed these words to one of his sons or to each of them in succession would not, in our judgment, seem reasonable; for we can scarcely think that Solomon would wish to call special attention to his own ways—"Let thine eyes behold my ways." He was not always a good pattern for a son to follow. It seems to us that we must look further for the meaning. We remember that Solomon was early granted special wisdom from the Lord, because of his earnest request in that direction just after he had become king. We might understand that he was personating wisdom, that wisdom was saying, "My son [whoever desires to be a son of Wisdom], give me thine heart." Since Wisdom would be only another name for the Creator, we might understand that God is giving an invitation to his sons to give their hearts to him and observe his ways. This, at all events, seems to be the good lesson that we may gain from this Scripture.

HOW SONSHIP IS LOST OR MAINTAINED

We see that God, who was the Father of our race, gave us our being, made us perfect, at first, in our father Adam. He also gave perfect life and being to the angels, and he wished that all these give their hearts to him. They were his sons from the time they were created. Lucifer was a son of God. Adam was a son of God. The proper course for a son of God would be to turn himself over entirely to do the will of his Father. But in the case of Lucifer, we find that instead of turning his heart over to the Father, he was self-seeking and attempted to do his own will; and he miserably failed. In the case of some of the angels who kept not their first estate, though they were sons of God they did not give their hearts to the Lord; and they miserably failed. In sinning all these lost their sonship. Only by continued loyalty and obedience can sonship be maintained.

God has arranged that humanity may come back to him. Likewise we understand that any of the fallen angels who repent may in the great judgment day come back into fellowship with God. His message would in due time be, to as many as desire to return to him, "If you would be my son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways."

Not until since the time of the first advent of our Lord Jesus, had this opportunity of becoming sons of God been given to any of his fallen creatures, and then only to a certain class of the fallen race of Adam. These were called to be sons on the divine plane of being, an offer never before made by Jehovah to any of mankind. Our Lord Jesus as a Son had wholly given his heart to God. And although when he came to earth this course of loyalty and obedience led by the way of tribulation, it led to glory, honor and immortality. Those who have since then sought to become sons of God, hear the message that the Father will not receive any except those who come through his Son Jesus as their Redeemer, and then make full consecration of themselves to do God's will.

We see that any who have attempted to be people of God and have stopped short of meeting these terms have made a serious mistake, and have not attained that which they wished to attain. We are to hold back nothing. We must yield full allegiance to the arrangements which God has made for our salvation. Our hearts must be brought into this attitude of full consecration, and held there. To those who in loyalty of heart meet all these reasonable requirements of the Lord he says, "'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10.

GOD'S WAYS AS SHOWN IN NATURE

Those who give their hearts to the Lord are exhorted further to observe his ways. What does this mean? Are we to attempt to do all that we see God do? It is proper for the Lord to execute judgment and to lay penalties upon those who are out of the way, who need chastisement. Would it be proper for us to judge or condemn in this way? No. It is not ours to condemn, to pass sentence, on any. We may condemn sin, and may disapprove of what appears to be sin

in act or word, and may kindly point out what we believe are good reasons for thinking it is sin. We may rebuke in love. But we are very liable to mistakes in such matters; and to condemn a person as unfit for the Lord's family, etc., is not our province. So we are not to follow the Lord's ways in this respect. But we see in the Lord's ways illustrations of his character—his wisdom, his justice, his love, his power. We note these qualities of his character by observing his ways; and they call forth our admiration and reverence. All God's ways will be ours some time, but not yet; for we are not like him, perfect, and not yet in a position of responsibility.

The world does not, perhaps, realize that they are copying the Lord's ways in very much that they are doing in this wonderful day—making force-pumps, engines, dealing with electricity, etc. Very few realize that they are attempting to follow God's ways. For instance, in the human body there is a wonderful mechanism by which the blood is pumped though the arteries and veins and by which the blood is checked. This mechanism is only copied in the best engines in the world. If men had only known how to copy from the nerves of the body, they would have known long ago how to run trunklines by electricity, etc. Any one who will observe God's ways will be much wiser than those who fail to do so. But the world knows not God. The people of God, however, even though they may not be inventors, may gain great blessings by observing God's ways in nature.

Note further the wonderful and superior wisdom manifested in the human body—a machine run with a very small amount of supply, which it takes at intervals and by which it is enabled to keep up the energies of life and its strength. And consider the horse. The amount of oats and hay that the horse will eat is comparatively small, yet the amount of energy and strength this will produce is wonderful. But with the human being there goes with this strength and activity an intelligence, a power to think and reason, which is very wonderful, and the more we examine it the more wonderful we find it.

GOD'S WAYS AS SEEN IN HIS WORD

When we become sons of God and begin to observe his ways, we begin to get faith, knowledge, the spirit of obedience, more devotion to God. All who are sons of God will study his ways. We especially learn of his ways from the study of his Word. This does not mean merely reading or memorizing the Bible. There are people who can quote whole chapters or books of the Bible, and yet do not understand what they read. In thinking that in the reading of so many chapters we are doing a meritorious thing we are mistaken. It is not the mere reading of the Bible that is helpful to the Lord's people, but with it the renewing and strengthening power working in us to will and to do his good pleasure.

THE CLASS TO BE HONORED BY THE LORD

"Them that honor Me, I will honor."—1 Samuel 2:30.

The words of our text are found in conjunction with the story of Eli and his family. Eli was God's representative in a very special sense—a priest and a judge of Israel. Eli's sons were also priests; yet they seem to have been egregiously wrong in their course of conduct, living in licentiousness, favoring injustice, taking advantage of their own position and that of their father to do violence to the principles of righteousness. Eli was reproved of the Lord because he did not maintain proper control over his sons and prevent their doing the things that were unjust, unrighteous, contrary to God's will and a disgrace both to his cause and to their priestly profession. These words of reproof were uttered to Eli, through the boy Samuel, as an indication of what was God's mind and to show him why the honor that had been given to him and his family would be taken away. The Lord's view of the matter is shown in the words of our text, "Them that honor me, I will honor."

RESISTING THE PROUD, GIVING GRACE TO THE HUMBLE

We believe that this is a principle that holds good always. Now, today, those who are seeking to honor God He will be sure to honor. Those who are seeking merely self-honor may obtain some of that honor, may glorify themselves to a certain extent; but it will not be the Lord that will glorify them. In the service of his cause, his truth, they will not be honored by him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, and giveth grace [favor] to the humble." The way to honor God is to seek to know his will and to do it from sincere hearts, to have God first in all our affairs, to show forth his praises. We are to never mind ourselves, our own honor. We are to serve in accordance with the principles which the Lord is promoting. To seek the glory of God is the proper course for us who are his children and whom he has blessed.

It might seem as if our text is in conflict in some sense with the words of our Lord, "Love your enemies." When we come to analyze the text carefully, we perceive that although the Lord says that he will honor them that honor him, and declares, "They that seek me early shall find me," yet he does not say that he will do harm to those who do not love him and honor him. On the contrary, the Lord's provision is so comprehensive as to include "all the families of the earth." God thus loves those who are his enemies—loves them to the extent of providing a sacrifice for them and a reconciliation with himself. But he does not honor his enemies.

HATING THE SIN, LOVING THE SINNER

We may well believe that God loves those especially who seek to do his will. We are commanded to love our enemies, but this does not mean that we are to love our enemies in the same way that we love the members of the body of Christ. The difference is that we would love our enemies with a sympathetic love, while we would love our brethren in Christ with a holy love, a love of kinship, of comradship. Sin is not lovely to God; or to any one else who is in relationship with God and is possessed of his Spirit. Sin is a deformity, an enormity, displeasing to the mind, the Spirit, of God. But God has a sympathetic love for the sinner; and he wishes us to have the same, to be ready to do good to those who would do us injury, who would treat us unkindly, who would persecute us. We are thus to be imitators of God.

God has been pleased to choose certain ones of the human family to be his ambassadors. Instead of speaking to humanity directly, the Lord speaks through these representatives, his children. These are the ones he will be pleased to honor, to make his representatives—these who seek to do his will, who are loyal to his word. Would God choose ambassadors who would not properly represent him? Surely not! We, his children, can enter into the spirit of the Lord's testimony here; and it is for us, therefore, to seek to honor him by showing forth his praises to others, both by proclaiming the pure message of truth and by our exemplary lives, that we may have his blessings now and may have the great honor that he has promised his faithful in the kingdom, so near at hand.

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY CLASSES

From various quarters we learn that the Berean Bible Study classes are increasing in number. This is very gratifying, of course, but at the same time it is leading into a certain difficulty. Where classes exceed twenty or so in number, they become unwieldly and proportionately less of a blessing and an aid. No matter how skilful the leader, it is impossible to do justice to larger classes within reasonable hours. We offer a suggestion: namely, that the entire class have a special time or times for meeting on Sundays when a part of the service might be in the nature of a short address, or several of them, from different brethren manifesting ability along that line. Then, during the week, have classes in homes in various parts of the city or town under different brethren manifesting ability as class leaders. These new classes, ranging from ten to fifteen, will have the opportunity of growing somewhat and then, later, develop into additional classes. Thus the witness of the truth will reach larger numbers, and various districts will be served, each and all having opportunity of participating at every meeting.

This same rule, we believe, will be found advantageous in respect to the Wednesday evening prayer, praise and testimony meeting. Let us never forget the importance of furnishing an opportunity for each consecrated brother and sister to participate in the class studies and in the testimonies. "If thou believe in thine heart and confess with thy mouth" is the Lord's suggestion of proper faithfulness. It is those who are thus faithful who usually reap the greatest blessing.

THE SIN OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY

"Everyone that is proud of heart is an abomination to the Lord."—Proverbs 16:5.

Pride would seem to be an inordinate and excessive amount of self-esteem or self-conceit. Everyone should have a reasonable amount of self-appreciation, to the extent that he would be able to know what powers he really has, so that he will not be negligent in the use of these. The feeling that would lead one to think he has no ability when he had ability would be an injurious kind of humility, an excessive humility. There are indeed differences of talents—some having a larger number and more valuable talents than others. These are to be esteemed and appreciated, but they are not to be a matter of pride.

Some use the word pride incorrectly. They say, "I am proud of my family," when they mean, "I rejoice in my family," or "I am very pleased with my family—I am glad that my family is what it is." To have an inordinate prejudice that would appreciate everything done by one's family or one's friends and depreciate everything done by the family or the friends of another would be wrong. There is no excuse for pride—and especially none for self-conceit. It is generally due to ignorance; although, of course, when due to ignorance, it is the more excusable.

The pride mentioned in our text is not due to ignorance. It is too great an appreciation of self. All such pride, the Lord tells us, is an abomination in his sight. This is not merely that God does not like it, but that there must be a reason why he abhors it. No creature has any real cause for pride. As the Apostle asks, "What have we that we have not received from the Lord?" We have absolutely nothing. If we had ten talents instead of one, our ability would be nothing to be proud of; we did not produce these talents. On the contrary, they were given to us. But to display the talents or to boast about them would show that we thought they were our own, and that we were proud because of our possession of them.

No man has a right to be proud because of receiving something from another. To that extent he is a debtor, a recipient. In the case of humanity, we are all recipients of the Father's favor. All of the blessings of life—both temporal and spiritual—are of divine provision for us. And if we have many of these blessings, there is still no occasion or pride. Pride implies self-sufficiency.

The Scriptures represent Satan as saying that he would like to have an opportunity of displaying his wisdom, his ability. He was confident that he could do something. He did not realize that everything that he had received came from God, and that the one blessed could not rise higher than the Fountain of Blessing. He did not realize that his wisdom and powers were inferior to those of God. Hence, Satan became a transgressor.

We may be sure that if the Lord's people cultivate any heart pride, they have thus a sign that they are not right in the sight of God. Even before they become the Lord's people, he has assured them that if they are of a proud heart he will not receive such into his family, will not beget them of the holy Spirit. Humility is the essential of all who would be of the Lord's family. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Peter 5:6; Matthew 23:12.

PRIDE LEADING TO DESTRUCTION

Yet there is a spirit of pride in the world. Some are proud of their ancestors; others are proud of their talents, etc. It would not be good that God should bless those who have any other than a grateful feeling of being a recipient of divine blessing. In fact, the time and trouble that is just upon us is the result of pride. All people seem to be proud. We may not be able to judge of the heart, but we do know of their attitude—their feeling of self-sufficiency. Each nation feels that theirs is the greatest talent; theirs are the finest guns, theirs are best everything; and it is this feeling of self-sufficiency that led the nations into the present conflict. Some of them express themselves as trusting that the Lord is on their side. They think that the Lord has always favored them—they are so good and so great that God could not help giving them the victory; and under these delusions they have gotten into this great war.

In respect to this great war and all the troubles that will ensue the Scriptures say, "The proud, yea, all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, said the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." (Malachi 4:1) Pride leads into all sorts of mischief. Before the Millennium is over, God will see to it that there will not be a root of pride in the whole earth. So at the end of the Millennium there will be no pride amongst the inhabitants of the earth, but there will be an appreciation of God and of what he has done for mankind. There will be a spirit of thankfulness, gratitude, just as we believe it is in heaven.

INTERESTING LETTERS

SERIOUS FAULTS NEEDING CORRECTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

For quite a while I have been desirous of writing to you of some matters which happen in some classes, yet I have not had the courage to do so for fear I might be in error. The matter, however, has come to my attention so often, and it seems to be so injurious to the Lord's cause, that I am impelled to drop a few lines, asking your pardon for whatever may seem to you as bad judgment on my part.

Some good brethren are elected as elders; they are zealous to do the Lord's will. Berean meetings are tendered them and accepted. Some of these dear brethren seem to get the thought that it is important to "feed" outsiders, but not so important to "feed the flock of God." So often when one comes to a Berean meeting, the leader will say as he opens the meeting, "Dear friends, I am sorry to say that I have not looked over the lesson," or, "I was so busy doing thus and so that I do not know where the lesson begins." Often I have heard this remark by leaders: "The class is pretty well posted on these things, and it does not make much difference whether I know much about it or not."

This thought seems to make them careless and indifferent. It seems to be so distressing to have a good-sized class and then hear the leader make such remarks of ignorance. What it the result? The meeting opens; a question is asked. Brother A. gives his view, then Brother B., then Brother C., then Sister D., etc. The views apparently conflict. A brother who thinks he knows all about it, says, "That is all wrong; it is thus and so"; then some more discussion follows; then the same brother jumps up and says, "That is not right." The leader is embarrassed, and not having studied his lesson dares not say a word, and finally the question is passed by without any definite decision.

I notice that in some meetings some of the dear friends who are backward go home without opening their mouths, because they are not encouraged. Some who are well up are called upon to do the talking, and sometimes the class has to sit and listen to a little debate between three or four.

Another matter: While it has been mentioned so many times in THE WATCH TOWER nevertheless some leaders, as well as the class, when they begin the lesson, have the question book in one hand and the STUDIES in the other. Since much reading is done, discussion is shut out, with the occasional remark, "It is so plain in the STUDIES that discussion is hardly necessary.

If these thoughts I have brought to your attention are out of the way, Brother Russell, kindly throw the letter in your waste basket. Nevertheless, until then, it shall be my earnest prayer to the Lord that something may drop from your guided pen which may correct these conditions and help the dear brother elders to realize their responsibility in this branch of the Lord's service—feeding of the flock.

Your Brother in the one Hope, ———.

[If brethren chosen to be elders are found incapable, it is the duty of the class to elect others—perhaps some of less ability, who, by study, will be more helpful. A good leader is not the one who talks too much, but the one who, by coaching the diffident, will help them to correct expression; or who, if the expressions are in his judgment incorrect, will very kindly suggest the proper thought without particularly calling attention to the mistaken views that have been presented—backing up his own expression with Scripture citations and citations from the "STUDIES."]

A JOYFUL EXPERIENCE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

An experience which we recently had so filled our hearts with joy, it seems we must extend the blessing to you:

A sister requested me to go to the depot with her to distribute literature to passengers awaiting trains. I replied "Yes," but no sooner had the answer left my lips than various suggestions of the opposite spirit came to me. As we neared the station I felt "faint," but the thought of our prayer meeting next, "I keep my body under," came to me and I was glad of an opportunity to overcome. Everyone received the papers with a smile or a "Thank you," which encouraged me.

I suggested that we go to the cemetery and leave "Where Are the Dead?" and "What Is the Soul?" in the open mausoleums, which we did. On the car we noticed a young man reading his Bible and left a paper for him. We had not gone far into the cemetery when we heard someone call, and found it was the young man, tract in hand. We had thought him a Training School student and expected a "lecture," but he asked if we were associated with the I. B. S. A., saying he had been trying to find our meeting place, and had wired the Head Office for information. Then we learned that a relative of his had taken home a tract from a public lecture, through which he had sent for "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, had read these, and started out to identify himself with a class.

We invited him to our home and to the evening meeting, from which a brother invited him home for the night. The following day he symbolized his consecration.

Our cup of blessing was running over! I was so happy that for a time I could not pray, but could think only of the Scripture, "In everything give thanks," *thanks*, THANKS! Had given out hundreds of tracts, but never had been so filled with the Spirit nor received such "wages."

We never cease praying the Lord's richest blessings for you, hoping soon we shall meet in the kingdom.

It was from our dear Brother Rutherford that I received the first message of truth over four years ago.

Your sister by His grace,

MRS. E. L. BENNETT.—New York.

INFIDEL THANKS GOD FOR PASTOR RUSSELL

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

It is with pleasure I take this opportunity to write and thank you for the comfort I have received from your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. I will thank God for them as long as I have breath. I appreciate better than I can express the good work you are doing. I know that the Lord will award you abundantly.

Although some of the preachers may try to paint you blacker than Satan, any man with a grain of common sense can see through their game. I am only a working-man with a limited education, and from what good I have received from your writings, I would be willing to stake life itself that you are not what your enemies paint you.

They say you are making infidels. We can thank God for such infidels (?). The sooner people get knocked off the creedal foundations, the sooner they will begin to build upon something solid, something reasonable.

I can say with positiveness that I know Pastor Russell's teachings are making Christians out of infidels, for I was an out-and-out infidel up to a few months ago. I feel that I would have remained so if I had not come in contact with the writings of Pastor Russell.

It was quite a few years ago that I made up my mind that death ended all, and that one would better get all he can out of life. But thanks be to God my eyes have at last been opened through the good Pastor of New York. I am now determined to do what I can to assist in spreading the truth.

I should like some tracts that would assist evolutionists and Jews to an appreciation of the true doctrines of the Bible.

Brother Sargent, of Halifax, and Sister Mason, of the States, are doing a good work here. Please remember me in prayer.

Yours to win Christ, J. A. TAYLOR.—Nova Scotia.

PROFITABLE BEREAN STUDIES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I have noticed in this and other parts of the country that some of the brethren leading Berean studies seem to be under the impression that they are supposed to do a good deal of talking. Now, for the leader of a study to give a five-minute discourse on every question or remark is surely a mistake; rather he should see that his place is to see that the study is conducted in an orderly manner, endeavor to get expressions from as many as possible, and then with his own brief comment close the question.

Sometimes I have noticed, too, that there may be a brother in a class who has a good deal more ability than have the remainder. He will comment at length on every question and emark. Would it not be wiser for such a one to control his zeal that others not so able may feel more free to express their thoughts? We say sometimes that "brevity is the soul of wit." Brevity in our Berean studies might be helpful all around. With much Christian love,

Yours in our Lord, F. H. HARRISON.

ANSWER TO ABOVE.

[We agree that a leader of a Berean class, to be most helpful, should draw the answers from the class—otherwise the brethren might nearly as well each read for himself at home. We have endeavored to give this thought in STUDIES OF THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. VI. We cannot, however, agree with the writer above that the leader's comments should always be very brief. There might be questions which the most skilful leader would not be able properly to draw answers from the class. In such cases, after doing one's best, the proper course would be for the leader to answer the question very thoroughly, but in as brief form as possible. Indeed, all of the answers or suggestions should be brief and to the point. Any one addicted to the habit of long talks on every question should be kindly reminded of proprieties by the leader in a private way at first, but, if necessary, in a kindly way before the class. If he still persists, an alternative would be to ask the questions of different members of the class by name, giving only a fair opportunity, and to avoid calling for general answers. This, however, is not desirable if it can be avoided.]

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OUR CONQUEST OF THE ANTITYPICAL CANAANITES

"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7.

Joshua records these words of Jehovah God, spoken to him at the time when, after Moses' death, he took command of Israel. The Israelites had then had their forty years' experience in the wilderness, and were just about to cross the Jordan and take possession of the land of Canaan. Joshua had become Moses' successor. The people had learned many lessons in their wilderness experiences; and now that Moses was dead, they looked to Joshua as their leader.

Joshua expressed his inability to serve in the place of Moses, through whom God had signally manifested himself. But the Lord assured Joshua that he would bless him all the days of his life, even as he had blessed Moses. Joshua had been found faithful in all his experiences. He was one of the two survivors of the wilderness experiences who, when starting out from Egypt, were over twenty years of age. Because of the faithfulness of Joshua and Caleb, the Lord had promised them that they alone of all the adults who left Egypt should enter the Promised Land. The others had died in the wilderness, save Moses and Aaron, Aaron dying in Mount Hor and Moses a little later in Mount Nebo, before the people crossed over Jordan.

The Lord's exhortation for Joshua to be strong and very courageous was in connection with the instruction that the Israelites were to take possession of the land of Canaan and destroy the inhabitants of the land. This command of God has been a stumbling-block to many. They have supposed that the Bible could not be of God when it bears such instructions. They have felt that it would be an act of injustice for the Israelites to go in and possess Canaan. What right, they say, had Israel to kill those people and take possession of their land? It belonged more to the people who already possessed it than to anybody else. To invade their country, destroy their lives and confiscate their lands and their possessions would be very unjust. The course of Israel is held up as an illustration of the "land-grabbing" disposition of the natural man, which has seemed to grow stronger century by century, notwithstanding the increase of civilization and his professed appreciation of justice.

This is the view that many take, and much to their own injury; for they do not understand the matter they discuss. When we say, that they do not understand the matter, we do not mean that they are people of inferior mind, but that they have not taken God's viewpoint. From any other than the right viewpoint, the whole course of Israel in this matter must seem to be unjust and ungodlike. From the right viewpoint, however, the matter is seen to be reasonable, just and righteous altogether. The sins and abominations of these Gentile people were such that their destruction was a very desirable thing. God had a great surprise in mind for this land of Canaan, which they inhabited. Moreover, the Jewish age was an age of types. Both Israel and these corrupt Gentile nations were typical.

CHRISTIANS TO BE NON-RESISTANT

In the present age, the Lord's people are not to take possession of either the persons or the property of others. They are not to destroy life under any circumstances. They are not to battle with any kind of carnal weapons. They are to be non-resistant. We are not of those who would defend the course of the professed Christian nations of modern times along these lines. As Christians, guided by our Master's example and instruction, we should seek to do good to all men as we have opportunity, and to leave them in peaceable possession of their homes, their property and their liberties. There is a great difference between the divine law of love, which is the motive power operating in the true children of God today, and the law of selfishness, under which the masses of mankind—including the vast majority of nominal Christendom—still operate, and will continue to operate until the new dispensation shall be fully ushered in by divine power.

Nevertheless, seeing that the true church is separate from the world in the Lord's plan and his dealings, we can look with comparative equanimity upon the overriding of justice and equity by the kingdoms of this world, and may realize that the Lord, especially at the present time, is taking advantage of their natural disposition toward warfare and conquest and empire-building. He will cause the wrath of man thus to work out certain features of his plan which will prove later on to be for the blessing of the whole world, those now in their graves as well as those yet living.

Not being able to see behind the veil into all the gracious purposes of our Heavenly Father, and not being wise enough to know how these purposes could be carried out, the peoples of the earth are groping on in darkness, thinking they are managing their own affairs, not knowing that a mighty hand is so directing the affairs of nations that his own glorious designs shall be outworked in all things, not knowing that nothing can thwart his purposes. The Lord's people occupy largely the position of spectators in respect to the course of this world—its policies, politics, conquests, its frantic efforts to carry out its selfish projects.—John 17:16.

Were we to take a hand in the affairs of the world, on either side of the great questions with which they are grappling, we would surely be working contrary to the divine program. The Lord does not purpose to give the victory now to either party in the strife. We are to be separate from the world and to give our thought and attention, our sympathy and interest, to the affairs of the heavenly kingdom; and while our voices, if ever raised at all on such questions, should be raised on behalf of justice, mercy and peace, yet we can view with great composure whatever events and changes may take place in the world, knowing that our Heavenly Father has all power to overrule these matters to his own praise and to the ultimate good of mankind.

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW

But the world tells us that we are too peaceable. They say that mankind could not get along without a certain amount of warfare. We answer that no one can understand God's methods except as he is guided by his Word, by the Spirit of the truth. God's dealings are different in different ages and for different purposes. These seemingly conflicting presentations of God's will are perfectly reasonable and harmonizable from the proper viewpoint.

Let us see. Back in Eden, the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," was pronounced upon Adam because of wilful disobedience to the divine instruction that a violation of God's command would bring death. After the fall, mankind gradually became more and more estranged from the Lord. Many of the angels, who then had access to earth with powers of materialization, fell from their holy estate. Mankind became a prey to these angels who "lusted after strange flesh." (Genesis 6:1-4; Jude 6, 7; 2 Peter 2:4, Diaglott) This condition of things was finally overthrown by the great deluge of Noah's day.

But in time the world again became very sinful. Then God made selection of one man from amongst mankind; namely, Abraham. He promised that if Abraham would walk in his ways, He would guide Abraham's affairs to his good and make of him a great nation and would bless his seed. And so we have Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God's special servants. The descendants of Jacob, God took into covenant relationship with himself during the days of Moses. Under Moses as their mediator, God promised to be their God and to recognize them as his people. If they would be loyal to him, he would bless them. If they should be disloyal to him and go over to the idolatry of the neighboring nations, then he would punish them for their sins and give them chastisements; but he would not forsake them.

The peoples of Canaan were in a very degraded condition morally. They had progressed so far in sin that it was no longer advantageous that they would continue in possession of Canaan. The Israelites were to drive out these peoples—and they were to be destroyed when necessary. There were certain nations which God especially commanded Israel to utterly destroy.—Deuteronomy 20:10-18.

When thinking of this command of God, we are to rid our minds of the superstitions of the past. These people who were to be slain did not go into eternal torment, but into death, into sheol, hades, the tomb. This would be an unconscious sleep. Those who perished by the sword are still asleep; they are not in pain, not in anguish of any kind. They are merely cut off from life until the general awakening time; for God has made a provision whereby those people may return to life, may be called forth from their sleep. All the blessings of everlasting life God has made provision for through Messiah. Messiah is to have a kingdom; and this kingdom is to rule the world in righteousness (see Psalms 96, 97, and 72), blessing not only the living, but also those who have fallen asleep in death. (Isaiah 25:6-9; Hosea 13:14; Romans 14:9; 8:20, 21, Diaglott) Many Scriptures declare this in unmistakable terms. Indeed this is the tenor of the entire Word of God. The divine plan runs like a golden chain through the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments.

This great Messiah, who is yet to bless all the race of Adam, must needs be their Redeemer, and thus the owner and deliverer of the people, as the Scriptures declare. Through his sacrifice for man he has obtained the "keys of hades and of death," as he tells us. (Revelation 1:18) He gave his life as the offset to Father Adam's life. This purchase price has not as yet been applied for the world in general, but will be applied, we believe, in the very near future. The Millennial kingdom of Christ is for the very purpose of giving all of Adam's children, not previously enlightened, as well as Adam himself, a full opportunity for everlasting life, after having had experience in the nature and results of sin.

From this broad viewpoint, we see that with these peoples of ancient Palestine—the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc.—it was a blessing that they died at the time they did. Vile and debased in morals, they were no benefit to themselves or to others. It was all the same whether they died by some kind of disease—consumption, pneumonia, cholera—or in some other manner.

Should any one ask, Why did God choose to have these ancient peoples die in battle instead of by disease? The answer is that the peoples inhabiting the land would be a constant menace to the morals of the people of Israel. They were not only idolatrous, but practised licentious rites, divination, etc. Furthermore, God purposed that the land should be put to a far different use. He had a great plan, in which it was his design that Canaan should play an important part. The land and its inhabitants were to be typical of God's dealings with spiritual Israel in the Gospel age. The type in which the land of Canaan was designed of God to figure could not be carried out without the expulsion of these heathen, or their destruction.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL EXPELLING THE CANAANITES

It is asked what type was here shown? We believe that the expulsion and destruction of these sinful nations by Israel was a type of how the people of God today, spiritual Israel, are to take possession of their human bodies. We are, as new creatures, to conquer, to destroy, these tendencies of the flesh which would enslave us. If we do not overcome and destroy them, they will overcome and destroy us. We are to vanquish the evil propensities, evil habits, vices, thoughts, desires, which have inhabited our minds, and are by our new wills to take entire control and fill the place of the former occupants with holy, pure thoughts, desires, ambitions, purposes, habits.

These human bodies are now the property and possession of the spiritual Israelites, the new creatures in Christ. There is to be no peace between the new creature and his flesh. We are to take warning from natural Israel in this respect. Failure on their part to drive out and destroy their enemies completely, as God commanded, was a source of constant trouble and ensnarement, and a cause of much idolatry and sin to Israel. And their experiences "were written for our admonition." Our warfare against spiritual foes must result in the utter destruction of the fleshly mind, and will also mean the death of the human body.

This warfare of Israel against their enemies may also be a picture of conditions in the Millennium. During the Millennial age the world, under the guidance of Christ and the church, will be brought into a condition which will fit them to have possession of the whole earth. Satan will be bound for a thousand years. Sin and the curse of Adamic death now resting on the world will be destroyed, together with everything con-

trary to righteousness. All these things belong to the reign of that "strong man" who has so long oppressed the world. Christ, the antitype of Joshua, will then be in control, and will show man how to exterminate these things of sin and thus eventually come into possession of the earth, the Eden of God, and each man be a king, a sovereign.

While the natural Israelite was to be a man of battle and to take possession of the land of the enemy, we are not to see in this fact anything that was not in it. For instance, it was not the Israelites who were to say that they would go up and possess the land of Canaan. It was God himself who was to give them possession. Nor are we to think that God was negligent of the real interests of these Gentile peoples. He declares that their iniquity had come to the full. It was no longer profitable at that time that their lives should be prolonged. Thus we see that justice was not infringed upon in giving the Israelites that land for an everlasting possession. This had been previously foretold by the Lord; but the testimony of the Lord, at the time the promise was made, was that it would not then be an appropriate time for its fulfilment, but there should first be a dark time, until the iniquity of those nations had come to the full.

BATTLE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL TODAY

Coming down to the Gospel age, we see that the spiritual Israelites have had a great conflict. It is a warfare against the whole world—no warfare so mighty and so momentous has ever been waged. Yet the conflict fought by the Lord Jesus and his followers has not been a fight with guns or other carnal weapons. We have today millions of people in great camps intent upon destroying one another. They are being goaded on by their rulers. There may be here and there a Christian among them, one who has truly given his heart to God; but these are the exceptions. The great mass of the world acknowledge that they have taken no such step as consecration to the Lord. Yet they are instructed by their rulers that they are God's people and are fighting his battles.

According to the Bible, only the saintly, only those who have taken the specific steps laid down by the Master for his disciples, are Christians at all. All others professing to be Christians are merely imitations—"tares." Through a study of the lives of saints of olden time true Christians are enabled to see more clearly the mind of God, the will of God, for themselves. They gain from the lives of Moses, Joshua, the Prophets, and other faithful ones of past ages lessons of faith, of courage, of zeal. They are instructed that all these Scriptural records are meant as types and as admonitions for the Gospel church; and they are thereby warned, strengthened and encouraged.

The Lord's people should not feel strong in themselves nor boastful, but, on the contrary, very humble and very insufficient—just as Joshua did. All of God's children are to realize their insufficiency in their own strength. They should feel that God has called them to a great work, and that they would make an utter failure unless the Lord gives his blessing. They are to look to the Lord and to receive his promises into good and honest hearts, believing that these promises are theirs, so long as they are loyal and true to him. Thus doing, they may be strong, very strong; they may be very courageous.

SHINING EXAMPLES OF THE PAST

We have noted the courage of our Lord Jesus himself, with a whole nation against him! It has been thus with all his faithful followers—most of them the poor of this world, who have had very little wealth or influence or honor of men. The true people of God throughout the Gospel age have been a humble class, yet they have been very strong and courageous. The people in the days of the Apostles "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus" and had learned of him. Those disciples of Jesus had seen his readiness to lay down his life in the Father's service. They had seen his courage when he was facing death of the most cruel kind, when he said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" And so we who have followed the Master since then have taken more of the spirit which our dear Lord manifested at all times, under the most trying and crucial experiences; and it has proven a wonderful inspiration to us.

The faithful ones have all along as a rule been little known in the world. They have not usually been of the great, the learned, the rich. In the past there may have been some prominent ones, some of noble birth, who were saints of God, living up to what light they had in their time; but they were the exceptions. We know that there have been many true saints who have lived quiet, uneventful lives, yet who have seemed to live up to all the light they possessed and to walk with God until they fell asleep in death. The world has generally ignored these saints of God, even when they were not actively persecuted. We cannot surely know who are entirely loyal and sincere at heart; but we may be sure that "the Lord knoweth them that are his."—2 Timothy 2:19.

COURAGE IN THIS "HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

Coming down to our own day, there never was a time when more strength of character and more courage were needed than just now. The iniquities of the whole world, and especially of so-called Christendom, have now about come to the full; and all present governments are about to be swept away, to make room for the glorious kingdom of God under the whole heavens—the glorious reign of the King of kings. All the ecclesiastical systems of today, calling themselves the church of Christ, are arrayed on the side of error and are battling against the truth and its advocates. So we need to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

Whoever starts out to battle in his own strength against this stronghold of error will be sure to be defeated. But if he goes in the strength of the Lord of Hosts, and has divine direction as to what he shall do or say, he may well be of good courage. Many earnest hearts are now asking for the Bread of Life, they are captives in Babylon or are famishing out in the "field," the world. These need our assistance.

Our strength will be tried—our hold upon God and upon the truth, and our courage in defending the truth. These will surely be put to the test; for Babylon is opposing our way. God will not have any in the kingdom who have not faithfully endured. Yet in meekness let us seek to instruct those who oppose themselves to the Word of the Lord; and let us look for the hungry and thirsty ones.

We do not know in what form some of our trials and tribulations will come. But we who are living in this "evil day," yea, in the very close of this day—in the final "hour of temptation"—surely need to have on the whole armor of God. We need to have our loins girt about with truth; we need the helmet to protect our minds, our intellects, from the shafts of error; we need the breast-plate of righteousness; we need the sword of the Spirit—the broad two-edged sword; we need the sandals of "preparation of the Gospel of peace." We need all these to overcome the Canaanites in our own breast, and to overcome all the surrounding obstacles.

Thus armored and furnished, we may indeed come off "more than conquerors" in the great conflict, which is daily increasing. We shall conquer "through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood." Let the promise of the Master be our daily inspiration: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

"Arise, then, O army of Gideon!
Let him that is fearful return;
Jehovah wants only the zealous,
Whose hearts with the love of truth burn!

"Your sword is the 'sword of the spirit';
Your lamp is the light from his Word;
Your pitcher, this poor earthen vessel
You break at the voice of your Lord.

"Is your light burning bright in your pitcher?
Doth your trumpet give forth sound?
Soon the sword of the Lord and of Gideon
The enemy's host will confound.

"For sure is the victory promised,
And great is the peace he awards;
Then 'stand' in your place, all ye faithful—
The battle's not yours, but the Lord's!"

PRAYER—ITS USE AND ABUSE

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray without ceasing."
Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

In the first text under consideration, we see that our Lord used a parable to point out the lessons he designed to give. A parable is a word-picture designed to illustrate some truth, but is not necessarily a statement of facts. On the contrary, it seems very rarely to be a statement of facts, but is merely a suppositionary case. More than this, in a parable the thing said is never the thing meant, literally. The wheat and the tares of one of Jesus' parables were not literal wheat and tares, but were the children of the kingdom and the children of the adversary. So the parallel here is of an unjust judge,

who had no appreciation of justice. Notwithstanding this, a poor widow came to him again and again importuning for help. To get rid of her he finally gave her the relief desired.

The Lord uses this parable as an illustration of our coming to the Heavenly Father—not that the Heavenly Father is an unjust judge nor that the church is a widow, but that the parable is merely an illustration of the reward of importunity in prayer. The woman's persistency in continually coming to the judge illustrated what Jesus wished to emphasize. In concluding the parable, he says that if an unjust judge would grant this poor widow her petition because of her continued asking, what might we expect of our Heavenly Father? When his children cry unto him day and night, he is sure to hear their prayers. This implies that the prayers are proper ones for the Lord to answer. We cannot think that God would do anything but that which is just and right and proper, and in harmony with this thought the instruction to the Lord's people is that in coming to the Lord in prayer we should make sure that we ask only for the things pleasing to him. Therefore Christians who live near to God are the best qualified to offer prayer that would be acceptable and would be answered.

"ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU"

Our Lord Jesus was thoroughly informed regarding proper prayer. We have his own testimony, "I know that thou hearest me always." He never had a refusal because he always asked the things in harmony with the Father's will. There must be two conditions met in order that our prayers may be answered. We must first have accepted Jesus as our Savior, and then have made a consecration to God in his appointed way. These steps must both be taken before we can be in Christ at all. When accepted of the Heavenly Father in Christ Jesus, we become new creatures in him. It is to the new creature that all God's promises apply. Whoever has not become a new creature by being begotten of the holy Spirit is outside of all these promises—but not outside of hope; for we see that, in God's plan, there is a broad hope for all the world. But in this "acceptable time" none can offer "acceptable prayers" except in this special appointed way.

There is but one sheep-fold in the present time. Only those who are in this fold are in God's favor. These have a right to pray. But there is a second consideration, after consecration has been made; namely, Are these abiding in Christ or are they going out of harmony with him? God's Word must abide in us—not merely that we should once have read the Bible through, or that we read so many verses of chapters each day—but the Word must remain in us, its teachings and principles must be assimilated and incorporated into our lives. Thus we shall be able to see what God's mind is, what is pleasing to him, what we should ask for and what we should not ask for, under his terms. All who thus abide in Christ, and in whom his Word abides, may ask "what they will." They may ask anything that is guaranteed in God's Word, and this means that they may ask whatsoever they will: for his Word dwells in them richly, and they would not think of asking anything not authorized therein.

BLESSINGS EASILY GAINED NOT APPRECIATED

Our lesson teaches continuity in prayer—not merely that we pray once, and then say, "I have prayed about this matter, and now I will leave it." But the question may arise, "Why continue to ask? God knows every need. Why not leave the entire matter with him?" The Scriptures seem to answer this question by showing us that we need to ask for our own benefit, that we may be ready to appropriate the answer when it comes. If we get things without our realization of our need of them, they would come to us so easily that in our fallen condition they would be unappreciated.

Indeed it is true that the majority of people receive daily many, many blessings that they are never thankful for; they do not appreciate them. God sends the sunshine and the rain, as our Lord Jesus told us, upon the evil and the good, and He intimates that these are great blessings from God. Yet how few people really appreciate the rain as a blessing from God! How few, when they see the sunshine, appreciate the blessing God is sending to them through the sunshine! Because these blessings are very common, and come without the asking, they are very little appreciated by the majority.

But the Christian, having the eyes of his understanding opened, appreciates more and more all these blessings as from the Lord. Therefore as he comes to realize his needs, and what is promised in the Lord's Word, he knows that he may advantageously go to the Lord in prayer that these needs may be supplied. His heart has come into that receptive attitude where he is ready to receive God's blessings thankfully and profit by them.

What, then, should we ask for as God's children? What do the Scriptures tell us to ask for? In the first place, they tell us not to use "vain repetitions." How should we understand this? Our Lord explains that we should not use vain repetitions "as the heathen do," who think that they will be heard on account of the number of times they repeat the prayer. The Chinese, for instance, have praying wheels, by which they can say a hundred prayers a minute. Thus they save time, voice, etc. But such prayers are only vain repetitions. Many professed Christians, we believe, practise vain repetitions; they say many prayers, which we fear often do not come from the heart, but are said over and over from an imaginary sense of duty or obligation.

NOT FOR OLD CREATURE, BUT FOR NEW

The proper heart condition would be one in which we would feel the need of the Lord's blessing and assistance, and would go to him in a trustful attitude, presenting our petition, and waiting for his time and way to answer. As to the things that we should ask for, the Master points out in one of his discourses that the heathen, the people of the world in general, all not believers, ask for earthly blessings—"What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" So might a child pray for these earthly things in its innocence of mind. But children of God should pray for earthly blessings only to the extent that they would minister to the growth or usefulness of the new creature.

As the Christian grows in grace and in knowledge he should come to realize more and more that he is a new creature, and that the new creature is to pray for itself and not for the old creature. The new creature must take into consideration the needs of the mortal body which is its tabernacle and its servant, but must ask for this body only what will be necessary that the new creature may properly develop, and may accomplish the work given him to do by the Lord. He may ask nothing merely that the old creature may be gratified; for the old creature is reckoned as dead. He may ask the Lord to supply his real needs according to his unerring wisdom.

We should pray for strength to overcome the flesh, for wisdom to know how to deal with ourselves, for strength of character and for the development of the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. We should pray for spiritual food, for grace and wisdom to keep our garments unspotted from the world to put on the whole armor of God. We should ask for wisdom as to how to understand the Word of God, and how to appreciate the Spirit of the truth. All these things would be proper subjects of prayer, because they are part and parcel of what goes to make up the new creation.

In these prayers for the higher things, we are not ignoring the body and its needs, though we are not to seek after the things that the Gentiles seek (the name Gentiles including all those who are not in covenant relationship with God). Those who are in this covenant relationship with God should not ask as do those who are not in such relationship. God does not hear the prayers of those who have never come into his family. They have not been instructed to pray. And we are to pray for things different from those for which they would pray. In all the words that Jesus spoke there is no suggestion that His disciples should pray for better shoes or dress or better home or how to pay off the mortgage. Jesus and the apostles never prayed for such things. What they prayed for is a suggestion of what we should pray for.

We are to distinguish between prayer, petitions to God and adoration. Any one may worship God, may bow down and adore him. But in the matter of prayer there is a limitation. Only certain persons may pray to the Lord with any assurance of being heard. And these are they who have become his people by a definite covenant. Any who have come into such covenant relationship with God have the privilege of prayer. This was true of the Jews under the Law Covenant arrangement; and it is true of us who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord through Jesus Christ. But even when privileged to pray, we must note the conditions of acceptable prayer. The conditions are that we should pray in harmony with the divine will and not seek to bend the divine will to ours. This would lead us to study the Word of God to find out the things which the Lord has promised us, and we should not ask outside of the divine promises.

BODY CARED FOR AS PROPERTY OF NEW CREATURE

We should appreciate the fact that throughout the Gospel age the Lord deals with his children as new creatures in Christ, and that all his promises to us are to the new creature. The new creature is interested in the old body, because this body is its property. The body's interests are ours as new creatures only in so far as these interests are beneficial to us in

making our calling and election sure to our heavenly inheritance, in so for as their consideration will in no wise interfere with our spiritual interests—but no farther. We are not, therefore, to tell the Lord what we prefer, but are to take what he sees best to give; for this will be what is for our best interests. This does not mean that we are not to mention to God our bodily needs. But we are to do so in the way that our Lord indicates to us in his sample prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread," our daily provision, acknowledging that the daily food comes from him, whether it is fine or common, bountiful or not. It will all be for the best interests of the new creature.

The prayer of one who asks only in harmony with the Lord's Word is certain to be answered. Good earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, gifts that they see are for their children's real interests. But if they see that the child is unappreciative of favors received, they might the next time withdraw the favors until proper appreciation is manifested. And so it is with our Heavenly Father. In bestowing his best gifts he waits for us to become really hungry for them. He does this that his blessings may do us the more good when they are granted.

PRAYER FOR SPIRIT-BEGETTING UNNECESSARY

In respect to the giving of the holy Spirit some people have a wrong conception. Many not consecrated pray that the Lord would give them the holy Spirit; but they have not studied the Scriptures enough. The Lord gives the holy Spirit without our asking for it specifically, just as with the disciples at Pentecost: they presented themselves before the Lord and waited. They were praying, but they did not know enough about the holy Spirit to pray for it. But the Lord gave the proper thing at the right time. And so it is with us, irrespective of prayer for the Spirit, provided we meet the required conditions. When we make our consecration to God through Christ, we do not need to ask for the begetting of the holy Spirit—no more than a child in its natural conception. The child does not ask for its own begetting. How could it? But after we have received the spirit-begetting, we should pray that we may have God's sentiment, God's mind, God's will, as our sentiment, our mind, our will.

God loves righteousness and hates iniquity. So we, realizing that we are surrounded by evil and selfishness, need to cultivate the spirit of love, that we may have that spirit which would appreciate and love righteousness. We are to learn gradually to love righteousness and to hate injustice and iniquity in large things and in small. We are to hate unrighteousness so much that we would scorn to do an injustice or an injury knowingly to anybody. The new creature sees these things but dimly at first—what are just and what are unjust things, what the righteous and what are unrighteous things. We wish to have the Lord's sentiments as our sentiments in everything. Thus by studying the Lord's character as revealed in his Word, and striving day by day to be conformed thereto, we are "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." And thus we become more and more filled with the Spirit.

EVIDENCES OF POSSESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As the child of God develops, the possession of the holy Spirit is more and more evidenced in his meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These are the elements of character, or disposition, that God wishes us to have. These are to rule in our hearts, in our thoughts, and more and more in our outward lives. Anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, envy, jealousy, all these are evidences of the unholy spirit, the spirit of the world and the adversary, which we as children of the Heavenly King are to put away. They are the works of the flesh and the devil.

Since all of us have a measure of the unholy spirit in our flesh, some more and some less, it is right to pray daily for a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, more and more of the spirit of harmony with his perfect will. But we must cooperate with these prayers; for the Lord never arbitrarily fills any heart with his Spirit, even after the begetting has taken place. By coming to the Lord in sincere prayer for these blessings continually, by asking along these lines, we shall be preparing ourselves to look for the evidences of the holy Spirit in our life. We shall be enabled to see whether we have more meekness than we once had, or whether we still lack in meekness. We shall perceive whether we are more gentle and more patient, whether we have more self-control, and in what respects we especially need to develop more in spiritual fruitage. Undoubtedly all of these qualities are lacking to a greater or less extent; but as we watch and pray, we shall learn to find the answer to our prayers; and as we grow in knowledge, in love, in Christlikeness, we grow in likeness also to our Father in heaven.

IMPROPER VIEWS OF PRAYER

Prayer, as we have shown, is very essential, absolutely indispensable, to Christian growth, yea, to spiritual existence. Yet we have never thought of praying in the extreme way that some do. We have never thought of telling the Lord all about his plan and of our wishes as to how he shall govern the universe, and when and how to bring to pass our own will. We think there is far too much praying along this line. The sooner it is stopped the better. In answer to the request of his disciples, the Master gave them a sample prayer, which was surely very different from the prayers that the majority of people offer, who seemingly do not heed the example at all.

The proper thing is to hearken to the Word of the Lord and not do too much speaking to him. We are to do a great deal of listening, while he speaks to us. The poet has well expressed this important thought:

"Master, speak! Thy servant heareth,
Waiting for thy gracious Word,
Longing for thy voice that cheereth,
Master, let it now be heard!
I am listening, Lord, for thee!
What hast thou to say to me?"

We understand that the Bible is the divine presentation of the divine will, purpose, plan, concerning us as his children. It is the truth that the Lord designs shall sanctify us. "Sanctify them through thy truth; Thy Word is truth." So declares our Master. He does not say, Sanctify them through prayer! The Master's prescription is that we study the Word and become sanctified thereby. And who is wiser than he? If we have not written a volume on prayer, it is because we find no Scriptural authority or precedent for so doing.

While prayer is absolutely indispensable to the Christian, as we have said, yet it is the Word of God which teaches us God's will and plan and which points out the way for us to go. We believe it is the failure to see this that has been largely responsible for the great want of faith of many professed children of God. No amount of praying will make up for a neglect of the study of the Lord's Word, which is the only lamp to our feet given us as our guide in this long, dark night in which sin has reigned in the world. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."—Psalm 119:105.

We are to "pray without ceasing." We are to do this in the sense of not being discouraged when the good things promised us and asked for do not come quickly. We are to remember that the Word of Promise is sure. We are to rest in these promises and to continue to ask and to wait for their fulfilment—patiently, hopefully. Thus we pray unceasingly, "Thy kingdom come," not by repeating the words every moment or every hour, but by continuing the thought, the expectation, the waiting for it, and by laboring in the interests of that kingdom and in the preparation of our characters in order that we may have a share in it. We have known some to fall into difficulty by supposed communion with God—remaining on their knees for some time beside an empty chair on which they tried to imagine the Lord to be seated, etc., etc. We believe that they were in danger of falling into a snare of the adversary by such unscriptural proceedings.

For our part we feel that the Lord has already granted so many blessings that we would be ashamed to ask for many more. Our own requests, therefore, must be few. The Editor's presentations at the throne of heavenly grace are thank-offerings, praise-offerings, indications of his devotion to the Lord and trust in him, petitions for wisdom and grace to guide in life's affairs. We recall the divine promises all the time, and not merely when on our knees. We seek to live in harmony with our prayers, and would encourage others to do the same. However, we are not all constituted alike; and having stated the matter from the Bible viewpoint, as we believe, also as viewed in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in other WATCH TOWER articles, we must leave it, trusting that the Lord's providence will guide his people aright.

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE SPECIAL OBJECT OF PRAYER

The reason why the prayers of so many Christians are unanswered is that their prayers are for things God has not told us to pray for or that they were not offered in sincerity. They have asked for wealth or temporal blessings, or perhaps for the conversion of a specified number of souls at their revival meeting, or something else unauthorized, or they have not really desired what they asked for, if it was for spiritual blessing. The Lord might grant a request for some temporal thing to a babe in Christ who prayed in his ignorance, not

being properly instructed. But it would be different with an advanced Christian. The little child at the table might ask for something improper and violate the rules of etiquette without blame; while a person of mature age, advanced in education and in knowledge of etiquette, should know better. The things for which the Lord's children should especially pray are specified in his Word. The holy Spirit is the special gift of God to his children.

When we come to know that the holy Spirit is the influence, the disposition of God, then we know what we are praying for. We want more and more of the holy Spirit of God, that it may make us more gentle, more kind, more loving; we want more and more of the mind of Christ (mind and Spirit being used here interchangeably). We realize that we must strive to have this mind of Christ. If we day by day cultivate the spirit of the devil, we cannot expect ever to attain the mind of Christ. If we determinedly cultivate the Spirit, the mind, of Christ, then the spirit of the adversary can gain no entrance into our hearts; and we shall become more and more sound in mind. We come to know more and more the perfect will of God as we are filled with his Spirit. Thus we are being prepared for an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom.

PRAY IN FAITH, NOTHING DOUBTING

The Lord in the lesson under consideration, tells us that we must not "faint," the word faint being used in the sense of faint-heartedness—"Consider Jesus, ... lest we be weary and faint in your minds"; "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." We may ask for more of the holy Spirit, feeling that we need grace along some particular line. For instance, we may feel that we need more patience. While praying for patience, we should not say, "I shall never be patient; I was not born that way!" But we are to expect our prayer along this line to be answered. We are to ask and then wait for the patience, continuing our petition, knowing that the patience will come, if we strive for it in harmony with our prayers. An excellent and practical way to assist in this is to impose a punishment upon ourselves for every outbreak of impatience.

The Lord's people have long been praying, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth." This prayer has been offered for more than eighteen hundred years, and God's children have not yet seen his kingdom established. Shall we cease to pray? Ah, no! We are assured that it will indeed come. Even now it is at the very doors! God's kingdom shall be fully set up; and the time will come when there will be no disloyalty in all the earth, as now there is none in heaven. Our prayers will not bring God's kingdom one minute sooner than he has planned, but we pray by way of assuring the Lord that we are waiting for the kingdom and expecting it in harmony with his sure promise. By so praying and not fainting, the children of the Lord are strengthening themselves. God's glorious kingdom will be manifested—and soon! Then all who have attained the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be exalted to reign with him in this kingdom.

THE SOURCE OF TRUE PROMOTION

"Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; but God is the Judge. He putteth down one, and setteth up another."—Psalm 75:6, 7.

One watching the stars night after night, would observe that while each one has its own motion, yet all seem to revolve around a fixed point which we call the North Star. This fixed star is apparently motionless, and therefore is a point by which a man may gauge his course. As we all know, the magnetic needle of the mariner's compass always points due north.

From the clearer astronomical knowledge of our day, it has been ascertained that while the planets of our solar system revolve around our sun, yet there are vast numbers of other suns each having its own retinue of planets, which with their satellites are revolving around it as a center. Furthermore, science declares that there is a far mightier center, around which these countless millions of suns revolve, accompanied by their planets and satellites. This great center seems to be associated with the Pleiades, particularly with Alcyone, the central star of this renowned group. For this reason the suggestion has been made that the Pleiades may represent the residence of Jehovah, the place from which he governs the universe. This thought gives new force to the question which the Almighty asked the patriarch Job: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth the constellation of the Zodiac in their season?"—Job 38:31, 32.

There seems to be fewer stars in the north than in any other part of the heavens. Thus the north seems to have been given a very prominent position, the other points of the compass giving it homage, as it were. This fact was observed by the ancients, as the Prophet Job declares—"He stretcheth out the north over the empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7) Throughout the Scriptures the north seems to be closely associated with Jehovah's government of the earth.

LESSONS IN THE RESULTS OF SIN

For six thousand years this planet earth has been a rebellious province in the universe of God; and God has permitted mankind to work out their own designs, to manifest what they could do. He not only gave his chosen people Israel certain promises and blessings, but he afterwards gave opportunity also to various nations of the world to exercise great power, to become indeed world-empires, as representatives of Gentile wisdom, to show what the unregenerate heart could give to men in the way of order, law, prosperity, blessings, peace. The period during which he gave this opportunity to the nations is Scripturally called the "Times of the Gentiles," a period of 2,520 years, which began with Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon at the time the Lord permitted his own typical kingdom of Israel to be overthrown, to so remain until Messiah's day.—Luke 21:24; Ezekiel 21:25-27.

During this interim the world has had four great universal empires. These world-governments have attempted to bring various blessings to mankind, yet they have all proven weak so far as righteousness is concerned, and strong so far as evil and viciousness are concerned. Evidently this is the great lesson which God designed that mankind should learn—that in this fallen condition human government cannot be a success; that perfection of being and perfect conformity to the divine law alone can give true happiness; that mankind in their present sinful, dying condition, can meet with only ultimate failure and disaster. Thus through actual experiences mankind will come to realize their own helplessness and their need of God.

But while God has been permitting man to prove his own weakness, he has also been preparing for the blessing of the whole world, as he has foretold in his Word. The time when he will take charge of man's affairs, through the kingdom of Messiah, will be the time when true and lasting promotion will be realized. All who will then come into harmony with God will receive this true promotion—the attainment of all the good things which were originally provided for mankind in God's plan, but which were lost by the disobedience of our first father and our first mother, Adam and Eve.

"God is the Judge; He putteth down one and setteth up another." The Lord will put down the attempt of the great usurper Satan to rule the world. Satan, originally Lucifer, conceived an ambition to exalt himself to "sit upon the sides of the north," to "be like the Most High." (Isa. 14:12-17) But very soon now he will be bound for a thousand years, and finally be destroyed.

So far as earth kingdoms are concerned, we may say that God has a general supervision over them in so far as they might otherwise thwart his purposes; and he sometimes puts down one and favors the exaltation to power of another. We are not able to say, however, that this putting down or setting up is in the nature of divine judgment for sin; for some of those put down have not been the unworthy, and some of those raised to power have not been the best, but often very evil. God has been merely so overruling as to cause all things not only to work together for the ultimate outworking of the great plan which he has arranged, but also to teach men the necessary lessons of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

"MOUNT ZION OF THE SIDES OF THE NORTH"

God's particular dealings with the world will be in the future, and for the first thousand years will be through the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father, and by the Son. In this glorious work of judging the world, Christ himself will be the Judge, and the church, his body, will be the associate judges. They will render righteous judgment in all cases, will set up only those who come into full accord with God, and will overthrow and eventually destroy all others.

In the meantime God has a special dealing with his people —those who have already left the world, who have consecrated their lives to him, who have been accepted through the Lord Jesus Christ and counted members of Christ's body. These are in the way to a promotion, a prominence, greater than that

of all others. Satan's ambition was for self-exaltation; Christ's ambition, on the contrary, was to please the Father and to do good. So likewise the class called to be Christ's associates in the kingdom have a similar purpose and spirit to that of their Lord and Head. They also seek to do only the will of the Heavenly Father. They also are moved, not to promote their own selfish interests and to gratify their fleshly propensities, but to lay down their lives in carrying out God's great purpose and plan.

This is the class which will receive the pre-eminence over all other classes, all other stations, in earth or in heaven. With their Lord they are to receive glory, honor, immortality. They will be exalted far above angels and be granted the divine nature, as has been their Master and Forerunner. (Romans 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54; 1 John 3:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 1:26, 27; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 2 Peter 1:4) These will share the first resurrection, Christ's resurrection. (Revelation 20:5, 6; Philippians 3:10) Their mortal bodies, now merely the instruments of the new creature, will be laid down forever in death—"Sown in weakness," they will be "raised in power"; "sown in dishonor," they will be "raised in glory"; "sown an animal body," they will be "raised a spiritual body."

A careful study of the above citations of Scripture will be very helpful to those who are comparatively new in the study of the high calling of the church of Christ. It is a subject but little understood by Christians in general. But such is the great promotion which God purposes to give his true saints of this Gospel age, and this promotion can be received from no other quarter than God himself, on his own terms. This is the glorious inheritance of Zion. When she has been thus exalted and glorified with her Lord, it will be said of her, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the City of the Great King." (Psalm 48: 2) Thus the great eminence which Lucifer in his pride and presumption sought to grasp, that he might "sit upon the sides of the north," will be granted as a reward to The Christ, Head and body.

PUTTING DOWN AND SETTING UP IN THE CHURCH

This is the great prominence which the people of God, called to this high station, should be seeking, by faithfulness, humility, love and zeal in the service of the Lord. During the present life, experiences of developing and testing are necessary preparations for this exaltation. All those begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures are now called the church of Christ, although the elect church proper will not be organized and completed until the first resurrection. Not until then will the personnel of the church of glory be manifested. But God deals now with all those who have made a Covenant of Sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5) When they meet, even two or three of them, the Lord's presence is in their midst; and each has the Lord's blessing in proportion as he has his Spirit. God is now judging in the church through his Son. He is not judging the world at present.

The principle expressed in our text is operating now in the church—the setting up of one and the putting down of another. That the Lord does take an active part in the affairs of the church we truly believe. St. Paul says that "God hath set the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased him." (1 Corinthians 12:18) This surely indicates a divine supervision in the church. We believe that a great deal of trouble is caused by the failure of many of the Lord's people to view matters from this standpoint. They are too apt to forget about the supervision and oversight which the Lord is taking of his cause. Some therefore have felt great distress if they were not elected to be a deacon or an elder in the church. Instead of looking at the matter from this viewpoint—that the Lord himself has the supervision of the affairs of his church—they are too liable to think, It was that brother who opposed me, or this brother, etc.

We believe that these take a wrong view. Perhaps the Lord permitted the matter to result thus in order to test their humility. The Apostle James intimates something of this kind: "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, and the brother of high degree in that he is made low." We should look beyond the mere circumstances of the moment; we should consider and remember well that all prominence, all promotion, and all control of the church, is in the hands of the Lord. Not only might the Lord wish to give a lesson to a brother who might have been a faithful elder or a faithful deacon, but it might also be a good lesson to the class. They might have failed to appreciate what zeal, energy and ability this brother had. If so, their neglect to re-elect him to the position would in time prove a lesson to them. The same is true in the case of a brother who has energy, zeal and ability with spirituality, who has never been elected to eldership by the class.

In any event it is for each of the Lord's children to exercise faith, and to remember that real prominence, true exaltation, is of the Lord. As the Apostle Paul shows, he that "desires the office of an overseer [from a real wish to serve], desires a good thing." So it is not wrong to appreciate such office in the ecclesia; and we are to appreciate it when we are chosen elders, because we shall thus have special opportunities for service and for laying down our lives for the brethren. But we are not to be self-seeking in the matter.

When brethren who have served as elders or deacons are not re-elected, yet are rightly exercised and manifest no resentment, but say, "I am just as glad to serve in one place as another," and enter cheerfully into whatever service is open to them, it will no doubt prove a blessing to their own hearts, and also a blessing to the class, who note their Christlike spirit. So such brethren should say to themselves, "I will do everything I can to forward the Lord's cause. The vote of the class has not given me the responsibility of initiative and direction, but I will do my best to help on in other ways and work of the Lord." Thus they would show the proper spirit of humility and submission to the Lord's providence in the decision of the class.

"HE CALLETH HIS OWN SHEEP BY NAME"

We believe the principle of our text should be considered in the daily lives of all the Lord's people. Some may fail to see the particular interest which the Lord takes in each one who is his. Every true child of God is the Lord's in the particular sense of having entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice. We should always remember this. Thus as we grow in grace we shall undoubtedly come to see that all "the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord, and he delighteth in his way." "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." (Psalm 37:23; 34:20) The Lord will surely direct the path of such. The Master emphasized his peculiar and personal interest in each of his followers. He calls himself their Shepherd, and says, "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." (John 10:3) This means a very special supervision of the affairs and interests of each one of his true disciples. Whatever may come to these is not a matter of chance or luck.

The steps of the world are not ordered of the Lord. But God's people in proportion as they walk by faith and realize that "all things are working together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose," in that proportion will they be able to have joy, blessing and peace in every experience that comes to them. Failing to do this, some of God's people, we continue to see, are fretting and chafing, feeling that things are working wrong with them, fearing that the Lord has forgotten them, or that the brethren have forgotten them, and that everything is amiss in their case. They are failing to recognize that God has to do with all backsetting. If he sees best not to promote them, not to use their talents for a time as they would like, let them learn a lesson of humility and submission, of patience and trust. Let them be willing to cheerfully await God's own good time for their promotion.

To us, then, the great lesson of our text is that promotion, exaltation, cometh neither from the east nor the west nor the south, but from Jehovah, who alone is the judge, who setteth up one and putteth down another—and all in love. If the putting down seems at times to be the result of mistakes or lack of appreciation on the part of the brethren, let us remember that it has come in the providence of the Lord, and is designed of him for our good, and perhaps for the good of others in one way or another. The experience will prove a blessing if received in the right spirit. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Nothing can by any means hurt us if we keep close to the Lord. Then in due time, we shall be promoted to sit with Christ in his throne.

HOW WE ARE TO WAIT ON THE LORD

"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart."—Psalm 27:14.

The expression, "Wait on the Lord," does not mean so much a rendering of service to the Lord, as a waiting for the Lord, a waiting before him, to see what is his will for us. We do not understand that it has the thought of ministering to the Lord, as a servant would wait on his master, but of patient watching until we learn what our Lord would have us do. Each child of God should wait to be guided by him, and not run on before him unmindful of what is the Lord's purpose for

him. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths," is the counsel of the wise man. (Proverbs 3:5, 6) Many of the children of God have made mistakes along this line.

Having committed our ways to the Lord, we should go forward only as he leads us. If we are not clear as to his will, let us not be in too great a hurry, nor try to guide ourselves, but present the matter to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking that we may have no will or way of our own, but may be guided only as he wills. Then let us wait and watch for the indication of his providence, and follow as he seems to lead, leaving the results with him. We are not to follow our own choice, without evidences that it is God's will. The question may sometimes be asked of us, "Are you going to do this way or that way? Are you going to this place or to that place?" Our attitude and our reply, if we have not as yet clearly ascertained the Lord's will in the matter, should be, "I am not yet fully decided. I will consider the Word of the Lord, to see how his instructions seem to apply in this case." Or, "I am watching to see what the Lord's providences seem to indicate, and am praying over the matter, that I may be guided aright." The poet expressed the right thought:

"I am afraid to touch
Things that involve so much."

Those who wait on the Lord do not always seem to prosper best, from outward appearances. But the Psalmist declares that we should be of good courage as we thus wait on God. We are pursuing the right course, and shall have his blessing. We make no mistake when we wait upon him. Others may seem to be getting ahead of us at first, but we are to "wait on the Lord."

Take no step unless you feel sure that the Lord is directing and guiding. Watch for the meaning of his providences. Study his Word. Let not your faith depart from its moorings. "Be of good courage!" "Good" courage is courage of a good degree, not merely a little courage. Be of strong courage; "and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." The word heart here may be understood to mean the soul, the being—especially the intelligent portion of us. The Lord will support us, he will fortify us and make us strong to bear, strong to do his will as it is made known to us. They that wait upon the Lord shall not want any good thing.

TRAITS NECESSARY TO SUCCESS

Courage, fortitude, persistency, in the service of the Lord are very necessary to the child of God. Such traits are needful even to the world. Whoever lacks these qualities of character is pretty sure to make poor success in life. Lack of courage, lack of hope, is one of the chief causes of failure in the world. Our text, however, calls attention, not to the world, but to those who belong to the Lord. The precious promises of God's Word, which are only for his people, those who are wholly his, give these every reason for hope; they have full authority to be strong and of a good courage. The children of God will have trials and experiences similar to those of the world, besides experiences and trials peculiar to them as followers of Christ. These come not to us in a haphazard way, however, as to the world, but are under the direct supervision of the Lord.

Those who are new in the service of the Master might think for a time that matters should run smoothly for them, that they should not have the difficulties common to the world; that now as they were God's children he would protect them from afflictions and mistreatment. But as they study the Lord's Word, they soon see that this is not true; they see that they are to walk by faith, and not by sight. They learn that they are not to expect to have outward and tangible manifestations of his favor, but that they are to suffer with Christ—that hereunto they were called. (1 Peter 2:20, 21; Acts 14:22) They learn that they must be obedient, and they come to see what obedience means.

The Master learned obedience — learned what obedience meant—"by the things which he suffered." The narrow way is not an easy path. His followers learn that the Lord is now calling a class that have faith in him, a class who accept his Word fully. In time they come, too, to see that "If God be for them, who can be against them?" If matters do not go as they had expected, if trials come, they will say, "We know that all things work for good to them that love God."

So these learn, as they are guided by the Word of the Lord, that they are to be of good courage as they pursue their onward way. There are many difficulties to be surmounted, and it requires courage to surmount difficulties. But the courage born of faith in God and in his "exceeding great and precious promises" strengthens them when otherwise they might be overwhelmed. It gives them a strength to which all others are strangers.

TRUST WHERE WE CANNOT TRACE

If a child of God becomes discouraged and loses his hope and strength, it is because he has lost his hold upon the Lord's promises to help. To lose courage is to lose faith. Loss of faith and courage makes a child of God powerless before his foes. We must trust our Father even when the meaning of his providences is veiled from our eyes and when our efforts to serve him seem to be hedged up. We look back at the Apostles and their experiences. The Apostle Paul was very desirous of carrying the message of the Gospel to others. Several times he tried to go into Asia, but he was not permitted to go. He began to wonder why this was, why his efforts continued to prove failures. But the Lord revealed to him that he was to go into Greece instead. In his first Epistle to the church at Thessalonica, he writes, "Wherefore we would have come to you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us." (1 Thessalonians 2:18) But we are sure that the Lord would overrule the machinations of Satan and cause them to work out his own glory, and the lesson of patience and submission would be a blessing to his children.

We see that in the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord had not lost faith in God, but was fearful for a time. As he came to the closing hours of his experiences on earth, he wondered whether or not he had faithfully conformed to all the Father's requirements. He knew that the slightest infraction of God's Law would mean his death. Had he completed his sacrifice acceptably? Would he be ushered from death into heavenly glory by a resurrection? Then he received from the Father the assurance that he had been altogether faithful. All the trials and difficulties which the Master underwent in the laying down of his life preceded him as a sweet incense, a precious perfume, beyond the veil, into the Most Holy as shown in the type.—Leviticus 16:12, 13.

A PROPER FEAR

After the Jewish high priest had crumbled the sweet incense upon the fire of the golden altar, after its fragrance had penetrated beyond the second veil and had covered the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat, he then himself passed beneath the veil. Every time the high priest raised the veil thus to pass under it he probably feared; for in case he had failed in any particular to carry out his sacrificial work acceptably he would have died as he passed under the veil. So our Lord Jesus knew that his work must be acceptable in the most absolute sense, else he would forever forfeit his existence. He would become as though he had not been; he would lose all.

There was no earthly being to give our Lord encouragement along this line. There was no one to say, You have done everything perfectly; you could not have done better. So the Master went alone to the Father for this assurance and for strength and courage. He prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done"; and the Father heard his prayer and gave him the needed assurance and strength. He was heard in respect to that which he feared; and during all that night and the following day, up to the hour of his crucifixion, he was calm and courageous.

So the Lord's people should have a proper fear. Proper fear is good for them. But it should not proceed to the point of hindering their efforts and dissipating their courage. They should have the fear enjoined by St. Paul when he said, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." (Hebrews 4:1) This proper fear the Master had. He never became discouraged, never held back from the work which the Father had given him to do. His fear was a filial one, which engendered a watchfulness and care, a circumspection of walk and of life, that he might be wholly pleasing to the Father. This all Christians should have. We should watch lest we neglect some privilege or duty.

This proper fear will lead us to careful inspection of ourselves. We should ask ourselves, "What do I believe? Why do I believe it?" We should go over the ground again. We should again go over in our minds the proofs of the correctness of our faith. By so doing, the Lord will strengthen us in the faith, he will strengthen our heart. If any hope in themselves, and lean upon their own strength mainly, it will be to their advantage that the Lord shall allow them to come to the point of discouragement, that they may become more timid, may lose all self-assurance, may realize their utter helplessness and weakness and their need of leaning wholly upon the Lord, of looking constantly to him for guidance and support. As the Lord's children thus learn to wait upon him, to them is fulfilled the promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."—Isaiah 40:31.

COLPORTEURING IN OFFICE BUILDINGS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

For some time I have been wanting to tell you about our wonderful privileges and opportunities in the harvest; and today when I read your letter in the May 1 WATCH TOWER to the departing members of the Bethel Family—that some of them might enter the colporteur service—I felt prompted to write, that these and others might be encouraged, and that especially now, in your travels, you might encourage the colporteurs in their work.

For the last year sister and I have been making it a specialty to call on the business men in the large office-buildings; and have had very good success. We do not feel that this is due to any great ability on our own part, but that it is all by the Lord's grace and his "ever-present help."

Many dear colporteurs do not realize what a great privilege they are neglecting when they do not call upon the business men; or, after calling on several they fail to arouse interest and become discouraged, while if they would persevere they would find their efforts crowned with success, just as much or more than in the homes.

We also find that delivering is so much easier among the business men, as we often get orders for several sets in one office, and sometimes for several hundred volumes in one building, all of which are quite sure to be delivered.

Business men, on account of the present financial condition, are becoming more and more awake and are looking for an explanation; besides, hundreds of these men are reading the sermons, have absorbed a great deal of present truth, and are anxious to get the books.

Many of us have been timid about entering the large office-buildings, fearing to meet these busy people. By letting them know that we will not be a nuisance to them, detaining them only a few moments, they usually grant us a little time, or tell us when they will be at leisure. It is best to see the manager of each office before speaking to the employees.

In all the cities there are thousands of stenographers, bookkeepers and professional people, who cannot be reached at their homes, and therefore have never come in contact with the STUDIES. Many of them are earnest Bible students, and we feel it a great privilege to meet these and bring them just the help they need and are often looking for.

While at present sister and I principally are working in the cities, yet we have also had the same experience in the smaller places. Business men in the small towns are even more easily approached, and invariably want the whole set of STUDIES.

We are still rejoicing in the Master's service, and received many rich blessings at the three-day convention here.

Yours in our Redeemer,

FRIEDA SCHLATTER.—*Kansas City, Mo.*

DEDICATING THE TEMPLE

JULY 25.—1 KINGS 8:22-30.

WHAT THE TEMPLE TYPIFIED—DOUBLE ANTITYPES—THEIR DEDICATION—KING SOLOMON'S PRAYER—GOD'S PERSONALITY—HIS DWELLING PLACE IN HEAVEN—"THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE TEMPLE"—ITS ANTITYPE.

"My House shall be called a House of prayer for all people."—Isaiah 56:7.

Possessed of reverence for the Lord, full of zeal for him, full of appreciation of the divine promise that King David's successor should build the house of the Lord, the Temple, for which David had for years made preparations of money and valuables, we find King Solomon speedily giving attention to this matter. In the fourth year of his reign, preparations had reached such a development that the construction of the Temple was begun; and seven and a half years later the scenes of this study were enacted—when the Temple was ready for dedication. Strange to say, it was dedicated about a month before it was completely finished. Doubtless this contained some important typical lesson, which we may some day more fully understand.

Built of white marble, the Temple must have been a very imposing structure, although not lofty. It was of but one story; nevertheless, its position on the mountain top surely gave it a very commanding appearance, its glittering, white walls overtopping the entire landscape. But we are interested in the Temple of Solomon more than in any other building because it was a type, as well as a reality. Let us note the Apostle's references to it and his declaration that its antitype is found in God's holy people—the church. We read, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them; and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16.

PREPARATION OF THE LIVING STONES

In the picture which the Apostle thus brings to our attention, the church corresponds to the Tabernacle rather than to the Temple. As God was with the Children of Israel from the time they entered into covenant with him until the Temple was dedicated by Solomon, he indicated his presence by a manifestation of the Shekinah Light in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. And so with us now as Christians: from the time we become sons of God—from the time of our consecration, justification, sanctification and begetting of the holy Spirit—our bodies are Tabernacles, or temporary dwelling-places, of God's holy Spirit. His Spirit in us is represented originally by the begetting influence which we receive as the start of our new existence as new creatures in Christ Jesus; and that light, or holy illumination, spread abroad in us fills us with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God more and more. The Tabernacle in one sense of the word was a temple—in the sense that any place where God is would properly be called a temple, a holy place. But, as suggested, it is preferably that we think of our fleshly bodies as tabernacles of God—his temporary dwelling-place. In a fuller sense, by and by there will be a great transfer. The Lord's saintly ones will be changed from flesh to spirit by the power of the first resurrection, and will thus be more perfectly represented by the beautiful Temple which Solomon built.

But there is a still more beautiful thought brought to our attention by St. Peter. He tells us that the various members of the church of Christ—the saints—are living stones, which are in process of chiseling and polishing, preparatory to the uniting of all these in one grand, glorious Temple of God beyond the veil. (1 Peter 2:5, 9) Any not enduring the chiseling and polishing will be discarded as unfit for the glorious temple.

The bringing together of these living stones beyond the veil will be by the resurrection power, beautifully illustrated in the erection of Solomon's Temple, of which we read that its stones were prepared at the quarry and then finally assembled for the construction of the Temple, and that they were so perfectly shaped and marked for their various places that they came together without the sound of a hammer—without need for chiseling or for other labor upon them at the time of the construction. So, St. Paul says, the church is God's workmanship. (Ephesians 2:10) And his work will be so perfectly accomplished that there will be no need of rectification or alteration beyond the veil.

It is this viewpoint that is especially interesting and profitable to the Lord's people. Such of them as can realize that they have been called of God to this high calling, to membership in the temple, can fully appreciate thereafter the necessity for the trials and difficulties of life which are shaping them, fitting them, for heavenly glory, honor, immortality. These are the "all things" working together for good to them that love God—preparing them for the spiritual blessings and services of the future.—Romans 8:28.

WORK OF THE GLORIFIED CHURCH

When we think of the church as the temple under construction, it impresses upon us the thought that there is a future work to be accomplished. Why construct a temple, and then not use it? Serious injury came to us through various errors of the past; for instance, the thought that the church alone is to be saved and all the remainder of mankind to be lost; and a further thought, that at the second coming of Christ the world is to be burned up, and the divine plan ignominously terminated. With such a view, the construction of the church as the great temple would seem to be a waste; since there would be nobody to be blessed by it.

However, as our eyes of understanding open more and more clearly, we begin to see beauty in the divine plan and arrangement. So far from God's plan terminating at the second coming of Christ, it will merely begin there, so far as the world is concerned. The church, in one figure, will be the royal priesthood for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Galatians 3:29) In the other figure, the church will be the great temple through which all the world of mankind may have access to God and return to harmony with him.

Thus, eventually, this glorified church, or temple, will be the house of prayer for all people, all nations—not that they will

pray to a house, but that they will approach God through the glorified church, in which his presence will be manifested and his mercy will be available to all. From this viewpoint, the Temple with its Shekinah glory represented the church in the glory of the future, in association with Christ; and God will dwell in and operate through that glorious church for the blessing of the world, represented by all those who will worship God looking toward his holy House.

DEDICATING THE TEMPLE OF GOD

There is an important thought in connection with a dedication which some seem to overlook. It was necessary for the Tabernacle to be dedicated, or set apart to God, before He deigned to recognize it and to use it. Similarly with all of God's people; it is necessary that they should positively and formally dedicate themselves to God and to his service before being recognized of him and filled with his Spirit. It is not enough that they should know of him and of the Lord Jesus Christ, and be persuaded of these things—not enough even that they should know something of the glories of the coming age as revealed in the Word of God. It is necessary, also, that they make formal dedication of themselves to God, fully surrendering their own wills that God may come into them by his holy Spirit and, accepting their sacrifices, constitute them thereafter his tabernacles.

When the Temple was ready for dedication, Solomon presented it to God with the prayer which constitutes the basis of today's Study—a prayer beautiful in simplicity and indicative of King Solomon's perception of the great truth that God is a personal God, whose dwelling-place is not everywhere, but in heaven. It shows us that the king fully understood that the Temple which he had made, like the Tabernacle before it, merely represented God's power and grace amongst his people. The presence of the Temple indicated that there were sinners who needed to be atoned for by its arrangements, and that mercy and forgiveness would be needed and that prayers toward God would be appropriate. "Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place; and when thou hearest, forgive."

So during the Millennium, all the world will have the opportunity of approaching God through his great temple of which Jesus is the Chief Corner-Stone, and the church the living stones under his headship. And God will hear the prayers thus properly presented, and will forgive the sins of the people; and as a result the work of restitution will progress to a grand completion.

As Solomon dedicated the Temple, so the church of Christ will be dedicated, formally presented to the Father. The great antitype of Solomon will do this; namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, presenting us all as his members, as the temple which is his body, reared up on the third day—the third thousand-year day from the time of his death—the dawning of the great Sabbath. (John 2:18-22) As a result of the dedication, the glory of the Lord will fill the house. The fact that the typical Temple was filled with the glory of the Lord before it was entirely completed seems to imply that at this present time there will be some manifestation of God's favor toward his church in glorification while yet the work of construction is not quite finished. However, it is difficult to read prophecy in advance of its fulfilment. We must wait to see what will be the fulfilment of this feature.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

"ASK WHAT I SHALL GIVE THEE"

JULY 18.—1 KINGS 3:4-15.

WHAT ARE DREAMS?—WHEN THEY SHOULD BE FOLLOWED—SOLOMON'S DREAM—HIS HEART CONDITION REFLECTED—HIS REALIZATION OF HIS RESPONSIBILITIES—HIS HUMILITY—HIS REQUEST OR CHOICE—GOD'S APPROVAL AND THE HAPPY RESULTS.

"The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom."—Proverbs 9:10.

We have nothing to indicate that Solomon ever became very haughty, proud, although he certainly would have been a marvelous man had his great wisdom, honor and wealth not affected in some degree the childlike simplicity which he expressed to the Lord in the dream recorded in today's lesson, which gives us a wonderful insight into Solomon's true character. Incidentally, it is valuable to every man, every woman, particularly at the beginning of life or in connection with the starting of any enterprise, and in proportion as the enterprise is a serious or a difficult one or one directly related to God and his Word.

Solomon initiated his reign by making a feast to some of his friends and the prominent people of his realm. The place chosen was Gideon. The account tells us of his offering a thousand burnt offerings unto the Lord. This does not signify that a thousand animals were burned entire; but rather that certain portions of them, particularly the fat, were burned as an offering to the Lord, while the food portions became the basis of the feast. Less meat was eaten then than now, except on such feast occasions. We can see the wisdom of such a general acknowledgment of God and of his inauguration of a new king; and the feast for the people signifies figuratively the good will of the king and his desire to make his reign one of prosperity, blessing, rejoicing, and helpfulness to all. The divine ordering of the matter was recognized by the Israelites, who perceived that all things were to be done with an eye to God's approval.

ARE DREAMS SIGNIFICANT?

It was during this feast, which probably lasted several days, that Solomon had the wonderful dream here narrated. That it was supernatural there can be no doubt. Similarly God revealed himself to others in ancient times, and especially to his people Israel, who had come into covenant relationship with him at Mount Sinai under Moses. But God was not in similar relationship with other peoples, who were, as we read, strangers, foreigners, outcasts—not in covenant relationship with him.

Although the Christian church is peculiarly in relationship with God, and in a much closer relationship than were the Jews under their Law, nevertheless we must not suppose that all dreams which even consecrated Christians may have are to be regarded as inspired. Very evidently the majority of our dreams are merely wanderings of our mind because we are not soundly asleep. For God to make fewer communications with Spiritual Israel by dreams would not signify a lesser interest in their affairs, but rather that he has otherwise provided for them, for their guidance—in the Bible. Additionally, we learn that he wishes us to walk by faith and not by sight; and to direct us continually by dreams would be to interfere with this walking by faith.

St. Paul gives us the key to the matter, saying that "the Word of God is sufficient," that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) But there is nothing to hinder God from using a dream as a means of instructing his spiritual children if that should seem at any time to be the appropriate course. Many of the Lord's people have had more or less experience with such profitable dreams, which seemed to give them the needed instruction or suggestion. Nevertheless there is but one sure way of receiving dreams; namely, to interpret them only in full accord with the Scriptures. The Apostle suggests that if an angel should proclaim to us any other Gospel than this, it should be rejected; and similarly, if a dream should suggest any other Gospel, it should be rejected. The divine Word is to be the great talisman, test, standard, for everything for the Christians.

SOLOMON'S WISE CHOICE

In Solomon's dream the Lord appeared to him, saying, "Ask what I shall give thee." So God is asking of all who would become his children. He desires to do them good, but he wishes them to realize their needs and to make requests accordingly. The Apostle suggests something along this line, saying, "If any man [Christian] lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally."

Solomon's answer in his dream shows us a beautiful simplicity of character for a young prince just come to the throne. He recounts God's mercy to his father David, and declares that this was in proportion as King David had walked faithfully with God in righteousness of heart. He expressed appreciation of the fact that God had brought even him to the throne because of divine appreciation of his father David. Then he recounted to God his own littleness, weakness, and insufficiency for the great position. Touchingly he declared, "I am but a little child." This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "When I am weak, then I am strong." This was really the strength of Solomon's character; namely, that he was meek, was teachable, like a little child—not boastful or self-confident, not blind to his privileges and obligations.

Because of the responsibilities of the kingdom, for which he felt himself so incompetent, Solomon prayed, "Give there-

fore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people [to administer justice to them], that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" Is it any wonder that we read further that in the dream the Lord manifested his good pleasure at this request: "And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither has asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment [justice]; therefore, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days."

"I knelt before thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace with suppliant knee;
And peace was given: not peace alone,
But love, and joy, and ecstasy."

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE FIRE OF THIS DAY

Prayers that God would stop the great European war have not been answered. On the contrary, as pointed out in these columns nearly a year ago, the entire world is involved and distressed. The Bible predictions that the armies of all nations would be gathered to the valley of Jehoshaphat is proving true. (Joel 3:9-14) The Valley of Jehoshaphat is the name of the cemetery outside the walls of Jerusalem, and the prophecy signified that the armies of all nations would be gathered as one vast cemetery. With a battle front of over sixteen hundred miles, and with all kinds of infernal machinery, the flower of Europe's manhood goes down to death. All the participating nations are regretful, for each had hoped for greater successes than yet achieved. The Bible indicates great disappointment of all nations—no great victory for any, but on the contrary, humiliation and impoverishment. Already the bonds of all the warring powers are greatly depreciated. All national debts are so heavy that many thoughtful people are expecting that a result of the war will be repudiation of all national debts, as well as social revolution. Great victories and final achievement console the people for great losses; and similarly, great national disasters in the face of a successful foe, tend to cement the national spirit; but with a terrible war, with heavy losses, peace will mean discontent, revolution and, according to the Bible, ultimate anarchy. How consoling the thought given us by the words of Jesus, that for the elect's sake these days shall be shortened, but that otherwise the entire human family would be obliterated as the reign of selfishness and enmity would progress!

Thanks be to God that we know who the elect are—Jesus and his saintly followers glorified! Thanks be to God that we can have confidence that these will constitute the kingdom of God's dear Son, and be backed by all the power of heaven in the establishment of the reign of righteousness! Thanks be to God that we can have full confidence in the divine promises to the effect that the outcome of Messiah's reign will be "peace on earth and good will toward men" in a world-wide Eden! Thanks be to God that we can trust his promise that Messiah's kingdom will be successful in the complete uplift of the fallen race out of sin and death—back to the image and likeness of God for whosoever will! Thanks be to God that after all shall have had full opportunity for such recovery, all wilfully wicked will be utterly destroyed in the second death!

Thus far we are told the war is not deeply felt nor deeply impressed upon the average non-combatants. In all the warring countries business is fairly good. Money is kept in circulation by the manufacture of munitions of war and military equipment and supplies. Thus far the chief brunt falls upon the soldiers in the ranks and upon the bereaved widows and orphans. The chief evidences of war, except on the scenes of strife, are the numbers of men everywhere in military uniform, and the numbers of women wearing mourning. However, as credit depreciates and gold becomes more scarce, the prices of commodities of every sort will advance, wages in Europe will be forced upward, with accompanying labor troubles, leading on to the foretold great earthquake—revolution (Rev. 16:18); leading on still further to the predicted fire which is to consume every vestige of present civilization—not a literal fire, but anarchy.

This fire has already begun as respects religious faith. Hearken to the Apostle Paul, "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." It will prove who have builded character and faith with the gold, silver and precious stones of divine promises, and who have builded their hopes with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition. The latter, the Apostle declares, will be utterly burned or destroyed by the symbolic fire of this day, while the former class of faith alone will be able to withstand that fiery time. Do we not already see this? Do we not see that the great professors of colleges and nearly all the great ministers of the various churches have completely lost faith in the Bible? Do we not see that the greater enlightenment of our time is making the creeds of all denominations ridiculous, absurd, to their own upholders and to all mankind? Do we not see that those who have abandoned the Bible have practically nothing left—merely their own guesswork? Do we not see that the guesswork of evolutionists is already proving unsatisfactory to them, and that they are losing all faith in a personal God, and merely assuming the possibility of an immortality of which they have no proofs and of the character of which they have only speculation? Ah, as the Apostle indicated, those who have the faith, the character structure represented by the gold, silver and precious stones of divine revelation—these alone have an anchorage of soul sure and steadfast which enters into that within the veil, and fastens for support to the merit of the sacrificial death of the great Redeemer who, "by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," and who by the grace of God is to be the great King whose kingdom will deliver Adam and his race from sin, death, ignorance, superstition, into the liberty of the children of God.

THE LORD'S BRETHREN NOT IN DARKNESS

Present conditions are very favorable for the spread of the truth. Everywhere the public are thinking more than ever respecting religious things, and wondering what it means that great nations, each purporting to be Christ's kingdom, should be so locked in deadly strife. Their perplexity and questions furnish excellent opportunity for explaining the Bible hopes and teachings. They are ready as never before for the message that these kingdoms are deceived into thinking themselves Christ's kingdoms, whereas the Bible calls them "kingdoms of this world" and Gentile kingdoms. They are ready for the message that Messiah's kingdom is to furnish the remedy for all the ills of the world by uplifting mankind out of ignorance, superstition, sin and death. They are ready for the information that although Christ was eighteen hundred years ago declared worthy to become the King he has not yet taken office in the full sense of the word, but is waiting for the completion of the church, which has been in process of calling and disciplining and polishing for more than eighteen hundred years. They are ready for the message that Christ is now taking to himself his great power and beginning his reign, and that the present disturbance of Europe is what is described in Revelation as the nations being angry, and God's wrath having come, etc.—Rev. 11:18.

In view of these favorable factors, we perceive our privilege in continuing to give no uncertain sound upon the silver trumpets of Jubilee. Apparently many of God's servants are being sealed in their foreheads with this knowledge, this present truth, as the Scriptures predicted: "Ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:4), though it shall come upon the whole world as a thief and a snare. As the Savior said, perplexities are causing the hearts of men to fail for fear and for looking after the things coming upon the world, still future, but because of the sealing in our foreheads—the clear intellectual knowledge—the servants of God may, as Jesus suggested, be lifting up their heads and rejoicing, realizing from present developments that their deliverance draweth nigh—that the resurrection of the church and her glorious establishment as Messiah's bride in the kingdom, are near at hand, even at the door.

WINDS OF WAR LET LOOSE

How plainly now we can see what we saw less distinctly in the past—that the winds of war have been held back for approximately forty years to give opportunity for the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads, for the spread of true Bible study all over the world, in all languages. Any one thinking of the present war as being suddenly thrust upon

the nations is surely short-sighted. For forty years the newspapers of the world have been foretelling this war as imminent; every fall they would declare that it must come by spring; every summer they would declare that it must come by fall, and it was so long held back by divine interference that many began to wonder whether or not the war might be ultimately avoided. But not so; the war is the only way in which the kingdom of Messiah can be established. It will be in vain that the message might be sent to the Czar of Russia, to the Kaiser, or to the Emperor Francis Joseph, or to the British King that the time has come for Messiah to set up his kingdom, and that all kingdoms of earth should now be turned over to him. They would laugh at such a proposition and resist it at every cost. Instead, God merely lets loose the winds of war—he will no longer restrain—he will allow human selfishness to take its own unwise course. He will allow all nations to deceive themselves into thinking that they will be more firmly established, and enlarge their domains and pave the way to future prosperity by this war. Surely it is in view of this that all nations have been preparing for this war for forty years, by the building of great dreadnaughts, the organizing of great armies, etc., each according to its sphere of influence and greatest power. Is it not a master stroke of divine wisdom which permits the nations claiming to be Christ's kingdoms to destroy each other's power, to weaken each other, and to demonstrate by their strife that they have not even the first conception of the Spirit of Christ, of which, the Apostle says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," a principle which is applicable to nations as well as individuals? At the same time it should not be forgotten that there are saints of God in every land, and that doubtless there are saints in every army—in these armies because of conscription—in these armies to fulfil the demands of the governments, but with fullest determination that they at the same time owe their highest allegiance to the kingdom of kindness, and fully determined that they will kill nobody. We are hearing from the front, that they are seeking to live up to the teachings of the Word of God, pointed out in the sixth volume of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, and that they are being blessed in so doing. What more could we ask?

"WAIT YE UPON ME, SAITH THE LORD"

Inquiries come to us respecting the advisability of enlisting in hospital corps, rather than to be conscripted for the regular service later on. Our advice would be to wait for the leadings of the Lord's providence and to take such steps only when fully assured of their wisdom. Now is a good time to remember the words of the Lord, "Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord." It would be a mistake, however, for any of the Lord's people to think themselves called upon to interfere in any manner with the world's course in respect to enlistment. Let the worldly use their own judgment, while God's consecrated people use theirs. To be "subject to the powers that be," implies not merely a willingness to serve under compulsion, but implies also that we will not oppose earthly governments in any public manner. The public reproof and overthrow will come from the Lord. The smiting of the image, which will grind it to powder, will come not from the church in the flesh, with carnal weapons, but from the church in kingdom glory, backed by divine power.—Daniel 2:45.

There never was a time of greater need that all of God's people should remember the Apostle's instruction, "Let your moderation be known to all men." Even in discussing the time of trouble emphasis should be laid not so much upon the trouble as upon the glorious kingdom which will be inaugurated at that time and through the instrumentality of the trouble. Let us remember one another in prayer at this time and especially those who are in desperate situations. The Lord seems to have provided the vow as a special means of comforting and supporting one another. Approximately 15,000 have already indicated to us that they have taken the vow, and that therefore they belong to this great world-wide prayer circle which remembers each other and all the laborers in the Lord's kingdom daily at the throne of grace.

KILLED, WOUNDED AND PRISONERS

RED CROSS SOCIETY REPORT TO MARCH 1, 1915.

Prominent newspapers are publishing the following:

The total killed in the European conflict up to March 1 of this year was 2,136,000; seriously wounded, 1,150,000; slightly wounded 3,781,100; prisoners, 1,764,000, making a total of 8,831,000.

These appalling figures were compiled by the Red Cross Society, and were furnished by the German consulate in Denver today.

The tabulated figures show the losses as follows:

	Germany	Austria	France	England	Russia	Total
Dead	482,000	341,000	464,000	116,000	733,000	2,136,000
Wounded:						
Slightly ..	760,000	618,000	718,000	185,000	1,500,000	3,781,000
Seriously .	97,000	83,000	439,000	49,000	482,000	1,150,000
Prisoners ...	233,000	183,000	495,000	83,000	770,000	1,764,000
Totals 1,572,000		1,225,000	2,116,000	433,000	3,485,000	8,831,000

Allies, without Belgians, Serbs and Montenegrins, 6,034,000.
Germans and Austrians, 2,797,000.

THE PRESENT ADVANTAGES OF FAITH

"Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."—**Hebrews 11:6.**

Paul the Apostle is in this text laying down a general principle as to what is the divine pleasure. God is not pleased to deal with humanity as with the brute beasts. He did not make man to live a mere animal existence, appreciating only the enjoyment of his physical senses. Man was made to glorify his Creator and to have a knowledge of him, in order to obtain the fullest happiness and blessing from the enjoyment of his God-given faculties.

As man shall in due time come to see his Creator's glorious character and the object of his own existence, and as he grows in ability to appreciate these, he will be most highly blessed. The knowledge gained will bring full confidence in God to all who become upright in heart and who desire to conform themselves to the grand purpose of their Maker in creation. Mankind are now bowed down with the weight of the sin and the accumulated infirmities of the ages, in bondage to Satan and his evil reign. Man has been the spectacle of the universe. He has been the source of astonishment and sorrow to all the holy beings in God's infinite domain. His experiences, his weaknesses, his degradation, his sufferings under sin, have through all the centuries been preaching most powerful sermons, and have been giving impressive object lessons as to the effects of disobedience to God.

Throughout the Millennial age, the great Jehovah will do a mighty work through the Messiah. It will be a work of opening all the eyes long blinded to the glorious light of the goodness of God. It will be a work of unstopping all the ears long deaf to the voice of truth. The sons of men shall be washed from their pollution; their wounds and putrefying sores shall be anointed, bound up and gradually healed by the Great Physician; their tattered raiment shall be exchanged for the garments of righteousness. By the close of the Golden age of blessing man shall stand forth clothed and in his right mind, a glorious image of his Creator in the flesh.

When man shall have attained the full likeness of God, he will not need any special development of faith; for faith will be inherent in him. He will have communion with his Maker; he will once more be a son of God. He will know his Creator as even Adam had such revelations of the terrible nature and results of sin, of the marvelous love of God in his deliverance from sin, that he will have an established character, fixed for righteousness, and a hatred of sin that will be an all-sufficient safeguard throughout eternity. After all this manifestation of the contrast between righteousness and iniquity, between the glorious sunshine of God's love and the horrible darkness and gloom of the pit from which they were lifted, any who still love and prefer the bondage of corruption will be destroyed in the second death.

When man first fell from his perfect estate, and the penalty of death was pronounced, the conditions did not manifest Jehovah as a loving God; and man thought he would be happier in his alienation and sin if he did not know about God at all. God gave, indeed, a hint of a coming time of restoration, when the Seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head; but the statement was vague. So, with very few exceptions, men tried to forget God, to give him no place in their thoughts or their affection. Gradually they drifted further and further away from him.

"WITHOUT GOD, HAVING NO HOPE!"

St. Paul in commenting upon this fact, declares that God gave mankind over to a reprobate mind. As they did not wish to retain him in their knowledge, he left them to their evil course, to pursue the lusts of their depraved minds, and to learn by sad experience the bitter fruitage of sin, and the misery, vanity and woe which it brings. Man's perverse heart must be broken, before he can be brought to a realization of his condition as declared by the Apostle in the words, "Without God, and having no hope in the world"! Humanity

has had bitter experiences, and has gone down from one depth of depravity to another, until now mankind have become so alienated from God by wicked works and self-will that many do not know that there is a God. Others conjure up in their minds a demon, whom they worship as God. So the poor world is today in a sadly confused, benighted condition.

Many believe that there is some law of nature, some law of development and progression; and thus they speak of nature as God—an impersonal god. They cannot worship such a god; for an impersonal god could not sympathize with them nor deliver them from their troubles. The Bible, however, presents a God of intelligence, a God of sympathy, a God who cares for his creatures and who has a marvelous plan for their restoration to his own glorious likeness. How glad we are that we know this loving, living God! How glad we are that he has let us into the secrets of his counsels, that he has made known his wonderful plan to us in advance of the inauguration of the great work! How it rejoices our hearts, to know not only of our own glorious share and place in this great plan, but to know also of the blessings so soon to come to the poor groaning creation!

BLESSINGS PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH

In proportion as the people of God come into close heart-fellowship with him, in proportion as they hear his voice speaking to them through the prophets of old, through Jesus and his apostles, and through his daily providences, they hear a good message, a glorious message, one that assures them of his loving sympathy, of his great power and of his purpose to exercise that power for the deliverance and blessing of all the world. As the Scriptures themselves assure us, it is a message of "great joy to all people." Some can believe and receive this message of good more readily than can others, and the more fully one receives it the more fully he will be blessed. Both knowledge and faith are necessary for that blessing. Some have not now the capacity for faith and some have not the knowledge. Those who have no faith will have to wait over for the next age.

Some can look out into the realms of space and by modern appliances and mathematical calculations determine the distance to the sun, the center of our own solar system. With the aid of the telescope they can sweep through the vast expanse of the universe and see something of its grandeur and its glory. They can study the movements of the planets in their various orbits, and forecast their future positions. They can ascertain also that there is a vast system of systems in the great material universe. Truly, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language. (But) their melody extendeth through all the earth, and to the end of the world their words!"—See Leeser and R. V.

But these wise men who study these wonderful works of the Almighty do not realize nor appreciate the love of God as manifested in his Son, our Redeemer. They have a certain knowledge of the Power of God, but very few of them appreciate his character. As the Apostle Paul has truly said: "In the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom knows not God." (1 Corinthians 1:21. R. V.) Jehovah does not purpose that any shall know him save in his own appointed way. The wisdom of man cannot find him out.

God is now seeking only those who have the true wisdom, in that they realize their own insufficiency, their need of instruction and guidance, and who can exercise the necessary faith when the message of God is brought to them. All others will be able to appreciate the message in the incoming age of blessing. Those who are now too wise in their own conceits will be brought through humiliating experiences to a contrite and humble condition of mind. The credulous will be given the true knowledge which will lead to a real faith.

Many noble minds are filled with the wisdom of this world. They think of the mighty universe with its millions upon millions of systems of worlds rolling through infinite space. They look at the earth, and think of the comparative insignificant size of the little planet on which we live. By the power of the microscope, they examine the wonderful construction of plant and flower. They scrutinize the marvels of the structure of molecules and atoms of matter, and of midgets, mites and microbes. Then they shake their heads and say: "The idea that a God of such infinite power would concern himself about humanity! He is far too busy to trouble himself about us!" These must wait a further and more favorable time for their enlightenment. The Lord can deal as yet only with those who have naturally some faith and who have gained a sufficient knowledge of himself and of his character to believe in his love and to be desirous of coming into fellowship and communion with him.

The basis of the Apostle's argument in our text is that faith is the essential thing in coming to God. God will not receive any one who does not exercise faith. St. Paul recounts the faith of the worthies of old, who gained such victories through their faith, and who received the testimony that they pleased God. Then he declares that whoever would come to God now must believe. There are some who are drawn to the Lord, who desire to come to him. There are others who desire to get away from him as far as possible and to keep away. These have no real knowledge of God, but are grossly blinded by "the god of this world."—2 Cor. 4:3, 4.

The class referred to in our text as coming to God or as willing to come to him, have a heart-hunger for their Creator—a longing for him that nothing else can satisfy. They say to themselves, "There is a God who made me. The more I learn respecting the vast universe and of my own anatomy, the more I see the wisdom and the power of God, and the more I realize my own littleness and weakness and need. For this great God my soul is crying out, and I have been told that he has made a revelation of himself, that to certain prophets of old he revealed the fact that he takes an interest in his human creatures. I mean to study what he has declared through these his servants. I am also told that he has revealed himself and his love further through Jesus Christ his Son; and that this Son of God came to earth and died for sinful man that he might live. If God has really given man his message, I want that message; I will draw near to this God, that I also may receive his blessing."

The Lord encourages all such through his Word. He says, "Draw nigh to me, and I will draw nigh to you." And as these come, seeking to know his will, he becomes the rewarder of their faith. He points them to the one who is the propitiation for the sins of all who come to him. He makes known to them that those who come to him through his appointed channel may have the Savior as their Advocate, upon the terms of faith and consecration to lay down their lives in sacrifice with him. Thus step by step they come into the fulness of salvation, and enter into the Holiest by the blood of the cross. They are accepted in the Beloved.

CREDULITY NOT FAITH

Many imagine that they have faith when in reality they have only credulity. Their so-called faith is not founded upon the Word of God and upon his promises. Such credulity will surely fail when the great testing time comes. Credulity is the acceptance of a thing without good reason, without sure evidence. Faith, on the contrary, is the acceptance of a thing because we have indisputable evidence of its reality, its truthfulness and its reliability. As we exercise faith in God, we come nearer and nearer to him.

"According to your faith be it unto you," are the Master's words. Every exercise of faith is based upon something real and tangible to faith. There is a mental tangibility for faith and also a physical, or outward, tangibility. True wisdom searches out the two grounds for faith. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him; and he will show them his covenant."

These increase in faith as they go on in the path of obedience. Faith and obedience are like our two feet. We put one forward, and then the other, and then the first one forward; and so we develop in faith by continuing in the spirit of obedience, following on wherever the Lord points the way. "We walk by faith and not by sight." But we have good, tangible evidences all along our heavenward journey. Outside of all other evidences, the true Christian has in his own personal experiences abundant proof of our Father's love and care. The Master said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall upon the ground without your Father. . . . . But ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:29) As he progresses in the narrow way the child of God comes to learn the fulness of meaning in these words of our Lord.

So the Christian who walks closely with the Master finds the truth of the Apostle's words that "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence [proof, conviction] of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) Faith is not only a groundwork, or basis, for our hopes (itself also having a groundwork in proven facts), but it is a real substance—a mental substance, so to speak, which stimulates and clarifies the mind. Faith is not a substance that we can hold in our hand or walk on with our feet. But it becomes a strength to our minds as we progress in the knowledge of God and of the things which God has to give to those who love him above all else and who seek to render him loving, devoted service. Faith becomes as real and tangible to us as any material substance—even more so; for the things upon which our faith lays hold are eternal.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION"

"Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."—Revelation 3:10.

Our Lord's words addressed "to the angel of the church in Philadelphia," had their fulfilment, we understand, during the period which closed somewhere about the time when the harvest of this age began. We are not to think of the different epochs represented in the messages to the various churches as being exact periods, as though there was a particular instant of beginning and a particular instant of closing. Rather we are to understand each to be a general period, which laps over the one on the other. So this period of faithfulness to the Lord's Word of which our text treats seems to have been one of some length, just as this Laodicean period in which we live has covered a considerable time, but is nearly ended now, we think.

For a long time God's Word was lightly esteemed. The transition from a poor understanding to a better understanding of it came on gradually. The Two Witnesses of God, the Old and New Testaments, long clothed in the sackcloth of the dead languages, gradually ascended to heaven, the place of honor and power, as the Scriptures symbolically represent the matter. (Revelation 11:3-12) Then came the general announcement that the time of the second advent of Christ had come. This was sometimes called the Wolff movement and sometimes the Miller movement; for one was the leader in one part of the world, and the other in the other part. America at this time was representative of the advanced thought of the world. This proclamation of the kingdom of Christ was a remarkable movement, which we believe is referred to by our Lord in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, who awoke and trimmed their lamps. But it was a false alarm. The Bridegroom did not come.

DISAPPOINTMENT OF MILLER MOVEMENT A SIFTING

This disappointment caused a sifting among the professed people of God. Some became all the more interested in the Bible as the Word of God, and did not doubt, while others became haughty and skeptical, and declared that the Bible was a foolish old book, that anybody who paid any attention to these prophecies must be soft in the head, etc. So these did not keep to the Word of God, but discarded its declarations. The promises and prophecies of the Bible relating to the Master's second coming, though positive and numerous, were abandoned by most of the great teachers. Consequently the people knew very little about the Bible. Of course their faith could not be much greater than their knowledge.

As a result the work of the Miller movement was a sort of separation, as between those who kept the the Word of God with patience and those who lost their faith in his Word. This persistent, patient faith of the true saints of God is what we think is referred to here by keeping "the word of my patience." The general hour of temptation, therefore, would not come upon them, but upon those who came after them—the Laodicean church. The Philadelphia church, which had patiently passed through so severe a trial of their faith, would not be subjected to the later test.

"The hour of temptation" has come upon us now. This hour of temptation has been the harvest time. In many respects it has tested the Lord's people, and has proven who are faithful to the Word of God and who are not faithful to it. Hence the majority of the professing Christians of the world—probably more than three-fourths—have lost all faith in the Bible, and have fallen into the various false and delusive theories of our day—Evolution, Higher Criticism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritism, New Thought, etc. They have fallen from faith, from loyalty to the Lord's Word. They are not able to stand in this "evil day."

FALL OF FAITH FOR A TIME

The trials of this "evil day" do not end with the church, "with the house of God"—though they begin there. The hour of temptation was to "come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth." The temptation, the trial, is going out amongst the people of every nation, especially to all parts of Christendom. In the severe experiences through which many have passed, they have been led to doubt the very existence of God. They cannot conceive of a God who would allow such terrible calamities as have already come, and who will allow the yet greater calamities which the thoughtful see are still to come! Not knowing God's great plan, not seeing the glorious outcome of present conditions, the golden lining to the dark cloud now settling down upon the whole world, people will lose all confidence in a supreme government. Poor humanity in their ignorance and blindness have not been enlightened through the Word of God, have not known of the coming kingdom and the method by which it will be inaugurated and the purpose and object of its inauguration.

So the present crisis is surely a time of great trial upon the whole world. Many of these have constituted a nominal church; and in this period of testing and shaking all church systems will go completely to pieces. Babylon will fall; for she is neither able nor worthy to stand in this great trial day. And great will be her fall! It will mean for a little time the general destruction of faith—the fall of faith, we think. This seems to be the meaning of the prophecy, "For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon; that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act." (Isaiah 28:21) Those not having understood, not having given heed to the Word, will be entirely disconcerted.

THE PHILADELPHIA CHURCH SPARED

As to the Philadelphia stage of the church, and their being saved from the hour of temptation, we think possibly the Lord meant that some of the church of that epoch would live over into the present period, and that they would not be subjected to the special trials of this hour. For instance, we think of a very fine old gentleman, who was about ninety years of age at the time we are about to mention. He was pastor of a church. He seemed to receive present truth with a great deal of joy and spoke it forth with much zeal. But he was surrounded with so much opposition at home, and in the church to which he was attached as a minister, that he could not seem to trust to his mental judgment. He apparently thought to himself, "I am about ninety years of age. I cannot trust the reliability of my own judgment. Even if I go on the street I need some one to take my arm, or I theirs, lest I run into something. If I were sure that this is the Lord's will, I would be willing to endure any amount of opposition. But I am not sure."

We have sometimes thought of that old gentleman as perhaps a representative of a large class, and we have considerable sympathy for him in that he was not able to take his stand and come out of Babylon. This Scripture which we are considering has rather comforted our mind with respect to him and others like him. These seemed to prove loyal to the Lord's Word, and faithful to the extent of their ability to understand. Probably any of these coming over into the harvest time would not be counted in as of the harvest period. We are not, of course, certain of this. We only know that the Lord promised those of the Philadelphia period that they should be spared the trials now upon the Laodicean phase of the church and upon the world.

HIS SERVANTS WE ARE TO WHOM WE RENDER SERVICE

"For ye were sometimes [once] darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light."—Ephesians 5:8.

John the beloved Apostle of Jesus wrote, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." This figure of speech pervades the entire Bible. Everywhere light stands for truth, for rightousness; and darkness represents error, superstition, sin. Our Lord Jesus being in full harmony with the Father, was the light of the world. To this end came he into the world. One of the titles he assumed was "The light of the world." (John 8:12) Although he was in the world, the world knew him not. They loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

The Apostle Paul explains that the darkness on the part of the world comes either directly or indirectly from the adversary. He says that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." Then he proceeds to tell us why this is so. Satan does this "lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," shine into their hearts. In order to keep mankind away from God, Satan has put light for darkness and darkness for light. This has been largely through good people, whom Satan has more or less used, ignorantly on their part, as his tools. As a matter of fact, darkness is very gross in the world, and light is seen only by the few. Thus the Apostle prays for the church that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened, indicating that the eyes of even the consecrated people of God are not fully enlightened, not fully opened. He prays for this in order that they may be

able to comprehend what is the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God, the love of Christ, which passeth all understanding.

We perceive, then, that to see God—to see the truth, to know the deep things of God—is to have a very glorious conception of the Almighty, of his character and his plan. We see that the adversary tries to keep us in the dark, and that God is permitting this for a time—permitting the ignorance, superstition, sin, darkness, which envelopes mankind. But those who learn of the Savior whom God has provided, who put themselves into his hands, who study God's Word, and thus struggle against the darkness of error, superstition and infirmity, get their eyes more widely open. As they do this, they become stronger of character. So there is a good purpose served in these battles. We are, therefore, to maintain a good fight against sin and against selfishness.

THE TRANSFER FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

A question may be asked as to how we pass from the one class to the other, how we were changed from being children of darkness to being children of light. We were once in the darkness class. We were once in ignorance and misunderstanding of God—in unbelief. We were confused with the gloom of the dark ages. But now we are enjoying the light. No one of us as yet has full light, but some grow more rapidly than others in grace, in knowledge and in love. After our begetting of the Spirit we progress in the development of the fruits of the Spirit; we are transformed in mind and finally perfected in the first resurrection.

This transfer from darkness to light, then, is accomplished in a more or less gradual way. The first thing we needed was knowledge—to have some measure, some glimpse of light. So if we were fortunate enough to have, as natural men and women, some glimpse of God's goodness, some appreciation logically of what is truth and what is falsehood, what is reasonable and what is unreasonable—to that extent we were favored in our birth. The Lord intimates that not all are called, not all are drawn. (John 6:37, 44; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29) To have this measure of light before we consecrate ourselves to God through Christ indicates that circumstances have favored us; either the circumstances of our birth or of our lives have been favorable to us. Under these favorable influences our eyes have been to some degree opened; and we have become more and more ready to sacrifice everything to obtain the light.

But if we are not of the right disposition, when we get a little light we prefer to fall back into the darkness rather than to walk in the light and to have the difficulties and trials which loyalty to the light will bring. In order to be worthy of more light we must have the character which will follow the light as it is seen. "If any man will be my disciple," said the Master, "let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me"—let him give up his own will, deny himself, die to himself, and give himself fully into the hands of the Lord.

"CHILDREN OF LIGHT" TO BE PROVEN

To those who see but dimly, this is a large contract. But those who love righteousness and hate iniquity to the extreme will follow the light whatever the cost. The Lord is gracious to these; and when they consecrate themselves to him, on his terms, he gives them the begetting of the holy Spirit. This is the start of a new influx of light; for the natural man cannot receive the deep things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. Only the spiritual can grasp them. (1 Corinthians 2:9-14) Then the Apostle proceeds to say that we the church, are able to understand these things, yea, the deep things of God, because we are begotten of God, begotten as new creatures, to the new nature. We do not understand them all from the start, but more and more they are revealed to us as we progress in the narrow way. This spiritual understanding is a guiding light, an inspiration to righteousness; it creates an enthusiasm for righteousness. Thus we become children of the light.

After we have once become children of light, there are testings, provings, for us to undergo. The Lord Jesus tells us that if we would be faithful to the light we must let our light so shine as to show forth the praises of our Father in heaven. He forewarns us that many will not appreciate our good works, but will say all manner of evil against us falsely, for his name's sake. He assures us that the children of darkness hate the children of light; but he admonishes that in these experiences we should "rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." Such is the sentiment of the children of the light that they will rejoice even in persecution and in tribulation. As they let the light, the truth, shine out, the error will be manifested to those of right understanding and of noble heart. The children of the darkness, of the error, will be angry with us for showing up the error in which they are entrenched, and will persecute us as they did the Master.

THE FINAL TEST OF THE CHURCH

It is reasonable to expect that the time will yet come when all who are faithful to the Lord will be treated in like manner as was our Lord. Indeed, it is already coming. It behooves us individually to put on the whole armor of light, that we may be able to withstand whatever persecution comes upon us from the blinded followers of the adversary. It does not necessarily follow that the instruments of Satan are murderers and thugs. When we look back at our Lord's first advent, we see that those who were most successfully used of the adversary against our Lord Jesus were the chief religionists, the scribes, the Pharisees, the Doctors of the Jewish Law —professedly men of God and leaders of his people. But "his servants ye are to whom ye render service," said the Lord. Those, therefore, who rendered service in the way of persecuting the Master, and finally in crucifying him, were the servants of Satan, no matter whose servants they thought they were.

But we are not to think that because of this they will be condemned to eternal torture. We are to remember, too, that they were servants of Satan partially on account of ignorance. As the Apostle Peter said to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul also bears witness of this fact, saying, "For if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." They did these things because they were the blinded servants of Satan, though if their hearts had been true and humble, they would have been able to see, as did the faithful "remnant" of Israel—the "Israelites indeed." The Jews who crucified Jesus went into an awful time of trouble therefor; but soon now, we believe, they shall "look upon him [with the eye of faith] whom they pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son;" and God "will pour upon them the Spirit of prayer and of supplication."—Zechariah 12:9, 10.

And so presumably today there are really good men who are servants of Satan and do not know it. If any know and yet do such evil works, it would seem that they will have a very serious account to settle. God alone knows the culpability of each. Their enlightenment too is near, and great will be the confusion of face of those who, because of unfaithfulness, have been instruments of the adversary to persecute, malign and afflict the true children of God, who faithfully proclaimed the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

OUR STANDING ONLY IN CHRIST

"A body hast Thou prepared Me."—Hebrews 10:5.

Mother Eve had no standing with God except as a part of the body of Adam, for she was taken from his side. We understand that this represents that the church has no standing with God of herself, that to produce her required the sacrifice of Jesus her Lord. In other words, she came from his side. The second Adam, is the heavenly Lord—the firstborn from the dead, the justifier, the life-giver to the world. During this Gospel age, God has been selecting the church to be the bride of Christ, and she has been in process of development. As the bride, the Lamb's wife, she may be considered to be the second Eve; and her work is to be during the incoming age, the mothering, or caring for the race of Adam, begotten again by "the Lord from heaven," the second Adam.—1 Cor. 15:45-47.

The whole picture shows us that the responsibility of the fall was in Adam. St. Paul points out that Mother Eve was the one who was deceived and was first in the transgression, but also points out that it was through Adam's disobedience that sin entered the world; and thus death passed upon all men, "for all have sinned" (Romans 5:12)—showing the effect of Adam's fall upon his offspring, through heredity. As "the wages of sin is death," and as the sin that brought the death was Adam's sin and not Eve's sin, it follows that the redemption-price would be that which corresponds to Adam, and not that which corresponds to Eve.

THE BODY OF SACRIFICE

When we read, "A body hast thou prepared me," as a sacrifice, we are not to understand this to mean the church, the

body of Christ, prepared for sacrifice. The body prepared for sacrifice was the human body of Jesus. It was prepared in the sense that it was provided him miraculously, and was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. Jesus alone had such a body prepared for him. The church has no such body.

Our Lord Jesus was ordained of God a Priest after the Order of Melchizedek; for sacrificially he was the antitype of Adam, and was first to offer up himself, and subsequently to accept his disciples, justify them through his sacrifices, and then constitute them members, or parts, of his sacrifice. It is evident that in the type only the high priest was ordained to offer up the sin-offering of the Day of Atonement. None of the under priests had such a right. So none of the antitypical under priests, the followers of Christ, are competent to offer up themselves. All that we can do is to present ourselves to our Redeemer, who justifies us—consecrating our lives unto death. He accepts us, imputes his merit to us, and counts us members of his fleshly body; and then by his holy Spirit, through Christ, God operates in us "to will and to do his good pleasure," which is to carry out the work of self-sacrifice even unto death. But all this while the Church is not sacrificed as was the High Priest, nor presented to the Father in our own name. The Father's dealing is only with our Advocate, and we are accepted merely because we are his.

All this is shown in the Atonement Day type of the sin-offering. The high priest offered the bullock first, as his own sacrifice—representing himself individually. Then the high priest, not the under priests, afterwards offered the Lord's goat—one goat, not many goats. This goat was offered, not as the sacrifice of the under priests, but as the sacrifice of the high priest. So in the antitype. Our consecration is acceptable to the Father only because of the merit of Jesus imputed to us as his members when he adopts us as a part of his own flesh.

This is in response to a question. We cannot make this matter more clear than we have here done, which is the same exactly that we have tried to say on this subject in the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in THE WATCH TOWER. We exhort to prayer that the mind of the Lord may be understood and that you may have a blessing.

HOW TO PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Speaking the Truth in love, . . . grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ."—Ephesians 4:15.

The truth is always to be spoken humbly, but fearlessly. The Christian is not at liberty to speak anything but the truth. If he is a professed minister of the Gospel when the truth reaches him, he is not to continue to preach error just because the congregation employing him do not want the truth. A worldling in the pulpit would have no qualms of conscience. He would reason, "I am giving these people the very things they want. They are paying my salary, and this is purely a business proposition." The worldling calling himself a minister of Christ would take this position because he had never received the Spirit, the disposition of the truth—the holy Spirit of begetting.

But one who receives the truth in the love of it, who imbibes its spirit, would say, "I now see that many of the things I have been preaching for years are injurious, dishonoring to God, misrepresenting his character, and to some extent, at least, turning people away from the truth. This is the very opposite of what I wish to do. I cannot longer dispense error. I am not an ambassador of a denomination or a congregation, I am an ambassador for God. I am not the servant of this congregation, but the servant of the Lord. If I should still preach error when I have come to see the truth, I would be guilty before God."

THE HONOR OF OUR AMBASSADORSHIP

Such a faithful servant of God would by his uncompromising attitude lose his standing and his honor amongst men. But all this is not to be considered; for he would gain instead the favor and blessing of the Lord. The great Apostle declared that he counted all things but loss and dross, that he might win Christ and "be found in him"—that he might gain a place in the everlasting kingdom of Messiah. Those who succeed in so doing will win the "pearl of great price." So, then, the speaking of the truth is absolutely essential to the life of the Christian. The truth of God's Word is to be enshrined above all else in the heart of the child of God, and he should esteem it a blessed privilege to speak it.

Our power of speech, of communicating our thoughts to others, is the greatest power we possess—the most far-reaching. It is a potent factor for either good or evil, for either truth or error. The opportunity to speak the truth, to confess Christ before men, either publicly or privately, is a great privilege. In order to be a servant pleasing to the Lord, one who can be effectively used of him, one must speak the truth in love. When one has just entered the family of God, less might be reasonably expected of him than after he had been for some time in the family. We, as God's dear children are to grow in the likeness of our dear Elder Brother, our Pattern, our Head. We are to "grow up into him in all things." We are to recognize that he is the Head of the church; and that if we are to be members of his body in glory, we must be developed. We are to bear the fruitage of the holy Spirit, that we may be qualified to share in the future that glorious kingdom which is to bless the world.

"EXPRESSION DEEPENS IMPRESSION"

We are to exercise our function of ambassadorship—we are to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of the darkness into his marvelous light. And in telling the message of his grace we shall grow spiritually. "He that watereth shall himself also be watered." As we proclaim the truth from an honest, earnest, loving heart we shall become more and more filled with it ourselves. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth and it tendeth to poverty"—to leanness of soul. As we give out to others, our own store of blessing is increased. We are to develop day by day this quality of love. Why is this? Because it will make us like God, and that is the one thing to be desired—the one thing necessary.

Our God has other glorious attributes besides Love, but this attribute is the especially predominating, overruling quality of his character. God's justice co-operates with his love. And his wisdom would not attempt to carry out any plans that his love would not approve. So as we grow, this quality of love should be more and more manifest. We are to see that our words are loving, kind, gentle. We are to curb any tendency to self-glorification or show in telling of God's great plan to others. Let us keep self out of sight, that the beauty of the truth may be seen. Our manner of presenting the message to others has much to do with its effectiveness. Speaking the truth in love, we shall not only be accomplishing much more for others, but the message will also be more impressed upon our own mind.

Whoever appreciates these things of God and then speaks forth in love and sincerity will receive a blessing in his own heart and mind, and the truth will become clearer and sweeter. In helping others he will be helping himself. Thus the various features of the plan of God become more firmly engraved upon his mind.

NATURAL QUALITIES THAT NEED RESTRAINT

In the cases of the stronger characters which come into Christ, we see a special need for watchfulness in the proclamation of the truth. Those naturally lacking in combativeness would not be inclined to bring strong pressure to bear upon others in connection with their presentation of truth. If their message did not seem to be favorably received, they would be likely to feel. They do not like to hear what I have to say; so I will not talk any more on the subject. They might be too easily discouraged. But those who have more force, or combativeness, are liable to manifest this disposition in the way they present the truth. They are inclined to be too forceful—to present the matter as an obligation.

But we are to remember that this is not a compulsory matter now. It is now an invitation, and is designed only for the meek, the teachable. By and by force will be needed, and used. Those who now have the hearing ear need only the word of instruction and counsel. Those who require force are not the ones the Lord is now seeking. If any of the Lord's ambassadors endeavor to crowd the message upon others, it will arouse antagonism and lose its power. Thus our King would not be so well served, and hence would not be so well pleased.

Others of the Lord's people may have great approbativeness. They may have pride and may wish to show off their ability in language, or their skill in handling the Scriptures. They might give out the message with the idea of arousing in others the thought. "See how much he knows—he is a master at handling the Bible!" Approbativeness seems to present quite a subtle temptation to many. This tendency of the flesh must be very carefully watched and subdued, or it will ruin the usefulness of the Christian and greatly hinder

his own growth. Some naturally like to be in the lime-light, while others are just as anxious to keep out of it. The one might have to force himself in order to speak the truth in public as an ambassador, while the other would need to curb himself somewhat. The only way for the latter to do is to learn to speak the truth in love and in humility—to speak it out of love to God and love to the brethren. The plan of the ages is God's plan. We have nothing whereof to boast. Therefore we should present that plan in meekness, gentleness, brotherly-kindness and love.

ISRAEL'S "SEVEN TIMES" OF CHASTISEMENT A BLESSING

Question.—If the punishment for all the righteous blood shed from Abel's day to our Lord's day came upon the Jews in the year 70 A. D., how can we explain the chastisements through which they have been passing all down the Gospel age?

Answer.—We certainly know that the Jews said at the time of our Lord's death at their hands, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." They not only were willing to bear personally the responsibility for Jesus' death, but expressed the desire that their posterity also should bear it. Doubtless God, with his foreknowledge in respect to what this people would do, as well as in respect to their general heart condition, had from the beginning planned their "seven times" of disfavor. This he had caused to be recorded by Moses in the book of Leviticus (26:18-45) God had there declared that if the Israelites did not repent of their transgressions against their covenant, and if his repeated chastisements failed to reform them, he would bring upon them "seven times" of punishment and discipline.

In Bible chronology a "time" is a symbolic year. According to Jewish reckoning each year was composed of 360 days; hence when used symbolically each year would mean 360 years, and seven such symbolic years would be a period of 2520 literal years. These seven times, or seven symbolic years, began in 606 B. C. at the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the entire nation into Babylon, at the time when the foretold 70 years of desolation of the land began (Jer. 25:8-12; 2 Chron. 36:14-22), and has continued ever since, we understand, or until about September 21st last.

During this long period of affliction upon Israel, the Lord has given the Gentile nations an opportunity of showing what they could do in the way of world-government. God had declared that during these "times" he would deal very differently with his covenant people from his previous dealings. He would walk contrary to them and would scatter them among the heathen (Gentiles); and they should be under the domination of their enemies, etc. It is a matter of history that the Jews have indeed ever since been oppressed by the other nations, "without a king," in full harmony with what was foretold by the Lord. This experience has been favorable to Israel as well as unfavorable. It has not been merely a chastisement for their sins. It has been an experience which the Lord has given them for their good.

"BEFORE I WAS AFFLICTED I WENT ASTRAY"

"During these "seven times," then, the Jews have had severe tribulation and discipline. All of God's people, of every age, have needed chastisements for their correction and development, some more and some less. God says to spiritual Israel, "For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards [spurious] and not sons." (Hebrews 12:8) And so it has been with the house of servants, natural Israel. Because they were God's covenant people, therefore he dealt with them; and he has really given them, during these 2520 years, experiences which will prove favorable to each of them as will incline to do right. Those bitter experiences proved so favorable that when Jesus came they, as a people, were the holiest in the world; and at that time they had suffered only a small portion of these "seven times."

So we find that the preaching of the Gospel by our Lord and his apostles found about five hundred of the Jews ready to believe and accept Jesus as Messiah. And soon afterwards, just after Pentecost, there were quite a number of thousands who believed. These, we are told, were Israelites indeed in whom there was no guile. It is very remarkable that there was so large a number in Israel ready to receive Messiah. This would not have been the case had they not been passing through disciplinary experiences. These experiences were all such as would tend to keep them separate from the Gentiles, keep them from mixing with any of the peoples of earth.

If the Jews had prospered under the various governments —Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome—they might have intermingled with these other peoples and have ceased to be Jews altogether. And the same is true of their posterity since their national overthrow under Titus, A. D. 70. In God's providence the Jews have continued to have such tribulations throughout this Gospel age as to have kept them separate from the rest of the world; and thus their minds have been kept in that condition of humility in which they will be best prepared for the Lord's service, when the time of their complete restoration to favor shall come.

Our thought is that when the proper time arrives the Israelites will be more ready for the kingdom than any other nation. The afflictions through which they have passed, their obedience to the law, etc., will have prepared them for the kingdom. We are not, therefore, to consider this long period of their suffering and affliction merely as tribulation, as punishment. For their ultimate good the Jews were to be trodden down of the Gentiles until the full of Gentile domination.

ISRAEL'S GREAT REGATHERING

St. Paul tells us that just as soon as the Gospel church shall be completed, God's favor will return to the Jews—return in the full sense. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles [the full predestined number of the church to be gathered from the Gentile nations] be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, There shall come out of Zion [the glorified Gospel church, spiritual Zion] the Deliverer [The Christ, Head and body, Jesus and his bride], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [natural Israel]; for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins."—Romans 11:1-33.

The Lord purposed to take away all sins—the sins of Israel, the sins of those who were to constitute the Gospel church, and the sins of the whole world. For this cause Christ was manifested, for this cause he died. This cancelation, or doing away with the sins of the whole world, will progress as each shall recognize the heavenly gift of forgiveness and obey the government.

The orthodox Jews, those who still hold to the teachings of the law and the prophets, and have faith in God, will be the first to receive the blessings of the new age. "As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your [the church's] sakes; but as touching the election [the natural election], they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." So, then, this condition of affliction in which the Jews have been throughout the Gospel age, in addition to the overthrow of their nation in the year 70 A. D., has really been a favor from God. All the tribulation through which this people have passed during the entire "seven times" of chastisement will be finally found to have been to their advantage, preparing them for the blessings of Messiah's kingdom. The church will be first in the kingdom, natural Israel with the ancient worthies at their head will be the second. Subsequently all nations will come into divine favor and blessing, becoming members of Israel. All will be blessed through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

"DOOR" PROBABLY NOT YET CLOSED

Question.—Would there be any prospect for one who consecrates at this time to be of the "bride" class, or has the call now ceased?

Answer.—We make a distinction between the end of the public call and the shutting of the door. We understand that the public call ended when a sufficient number had been invited and had accepted the invitation—in 1881. But of these invited and accepted ones there was still to be a testing. Only those enduring loyalty to the end will be finally counted in as victors. Others, not proving wholly loyal to their covenant in their daily lives, will in time be dropped from the list, which would mean that they had not been running faithfully. This would continually make vacancies to be filled. But such a filling of vacancies would not require a new call, but merely a permission for one to enter as one went out.

Our thought is that a large number of those who consecrated prior to 1881 failed to "make good." It is our thought that you are still in time to make your consecration, with every reason for hoping that you may make your calling and election sure by zealous faithfulness in sacrificing earthly interests in favor of the heavenly.

In any event, the most reasonable thing for any of us to do would be to give ourselves wholly to the Lord, just as soon as we realize our imperfection and the Lord's sufficiency. We should be glad to have him as our care-taker, regardless of what reward he would give. We should be sure that so great and so generous a King as God would give good gifts to all who are his. In other words, after the little flock is completed, the Lord will be glad to bless in some other manner others who have the spirit of obedience and sacrifice.

QUEEN OF SHEBA VISITS SOLOMON

AUGUST 1.—1 KINGS 10:1-10, 13.

KING SOLOMON'S RENOWN—A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR—SOLOMON'S GREAT ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATS—HIS LITERARY ATTAINMENTS—"THE HALF WAS NOT TOLD"—"A GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE"—RICHES OF DIVINE FAVOR.

"Wisdom is better than rubies."—Proverbs 8:11.

In answer to King Solomon's prayer for wisdom, God promised him both wisdom and riches that would make him world-famous. By the middle of his reign King Solomon had accomplished marvels for his nation. Its fame spread to every land. He was known as the wise king, the peaceful king, the rich king.

We may suppose that the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon was about the middle of his reign—after he had been manifesting his wisdom for twenty years. She came, it is supposed, a journey of 1,500 miles, with quite a large retinue of servants and camels, and with valuable presents, gold and Arabian perfumes. Our lesson gives the queen's own statement of her object in coming to see King Solomon, and of how she found the facts to be more than double all of her anticipations and all the stories that had been told respecting King Solomon's wisdom and riches and the prosperity of his kingdom.

THE WONDERS OF SOLOMON

The Temple of the Lord, the materials of which his father David had prepared for him years before, was one of the first marvels of King Solomon's reign. Its beauty and its cost as a religious edifice were a world marvel. Then the king's own palace and the corridor, or ascent which led from his house to the Temple, were marvelous for that time, and indeed for any time until the wonders of engineering and architecture brought forward during the past century, which is noted in the Bible as the period of God's preparation for Messiah's kingdom.—Nahum 2:3.

Another great engineering feat of King Solomon was called the Pools of Solomon—the system of water supply for his capital, Jerusalem. These pools were connected by covered aqueducts, the first known in history. Additionally, he built strongholds or fortresses throughout his kingdom, for its defense against invaders. Furthermore, he extended the boundaries of his kingdom to the full limits set by the Lord prophetically long before. (Genesis 15:18) This brought his kingdom down to the seacoast. Near Joppa (Jaffa) he had a harbor for ships, which is now completely cut off from the sea, and, having gradually filled up with earth, has become a beautiful orange grove.

But his largest port of entry was at the city of Tyre—not in his own domain. He did business through the king of Tyre; and unitedly their ships traversed the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, etc., bringing commerce from all parts of the world, and affording good facilities for importing goods not produced in Palestine. It was through this means that King Solomon became so very rich that figuratively it was said that the precious metals became as common as stones in Jerusalem.

A ROYAL VISITOR

Busied with these enterprises, and at heart loyal to God, Solomon's reign, by the time of the Queen of Sheba's visit, seems to have been a most wonderful one. Later, satisfied with the blessings of the present life, the king seems to have been less wise and less a man after God's own heart and less thoughtful for his people. It is difficult, especially for the poor, to realize how great are the temptations of the rich and the danger that even a wise man may become foolish through the gratification of every desire of his heart. Incidentally, we should not forget King Solomon's literary achievements. He wrote three thousand proverbs and a thousand songs. Surely the Lord did for him to the full all that he had promised.

It was this great King Solomon that the Queen of Sheba visited, with presents of gold and spices, desiring to learn to a certainty respecting his wonderful wisdom and skill. Her declaration was that the rumors which had reached her were less than half of the reality which she beheld and heard. She had questions to ask, probably respecting God and the future life; for apparently she recognized in Solomon more than human wisdom, and accredited to him wisdom from on high. She exclaimed, "Blessed be Jehovah thy God, which delighteth in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel! Because Jehovah loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king to do judgment and justice. Happy are thy men, happy these thy servants, which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom." "And King Solomon gave unto the Queen of Sheba all of her desire, whatsoever she asked; besides which, he gave her of his royal bounty"—a present. So she returned to her own country with her retinue.

"A GREATER THAN SOLOMON"

Jesus remarked on the story of our lesson, and marveled that there were no more to appreciate himself and the wonderful lessons which he set forth respecting the kingdom of God. (Matthew 12:42) For people to travel a long distance merely to know about the wisdom of God such as King Solomon possessed, would imply that if it were known that a still wiser one could be conferred with, he would be sought; and if it should be known that this wiser one was heir to the world, and that he was seeking a bride for his joint-heirship, how many might be expected to hasten to him and to accept the generous proposal!

This is exactly the condition of things. God's Son, according to the divine program, is selecting a bride class. To be acceptable as a member of this class, we must hear of how the wisdom of God centers in Jesus, how he is the Father's agent and representative in all the work of creation, past, present and future. Additionally, we must be so thoroughly impressed with this matter that we would leave all to go to him to prove the matter for ourselves, to be convinced. Thus coming to Jesus, we are sure to be accepted, not merely that we might ask, as the queen did, for certain blessings, but that the King would enter into a covenant of espousal.

The fact that not all are attracted to the Lord is the basis for our opportunity; for the Scriptures declare that the bride of the Lamb is foreordained of God. The first opportunity to be of this elect company was given to the natural seed of Abraham. Had they accepted their privileges, the church would have been completed in Jesus' day; but, as the Bible tells us, the Jews knew not the time of their visitation—did not appreciate who was with them—the Greater than Solomon. (Luke 19:44) They did not inquire for the kingdom nor for the terms of membership. They crucified the Prince of Life, unwittingly.

Nevertheless, a wonderfully large part of that little nation, as "Israelites indeed," accepted Jesus, giving themselves wholly to him—surrendering their wills. Then the nation was set aside temporarily while the door of this high calling to membership with Christ was thrown open to the Gentiles. The unreadiness of the Gentiles to receive the message of God is indicated by the fact that it has required all the eighteen centuries since to complete the elect number which, apparently, is only 144,000 altogether, "out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue."

THE WISEST KING MISLED

AUGUST 8.—1 KINGS 12:1-24.

ISRAEL'S WISEST KING BECAME MOST FOOLISH—DISSATISFACTION AMONGST THE PEOPLE—JERUSALEM FAVORED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE NATION—KING SOLOMON'S SON AND SUCCESSOR—THE REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES—THE KINGDOMS REUNITED AFTER THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."—Proverbs 16:18.

Great as King Solomon was, the latter part of his reign was less wonderful and less creditable than the first half. Although no rebellion took place during his time, nevertheless dissatisfaction was felt. The king rested upon the marvels of the early part of his reign, became more and more interested in foreign affairs, and multiplied the number of his wives and of his troubles. The wealth of the nation, represented in the great public improvements, was really public wealth, in which all the people were interested; but the subsequent greater attention to personal aggrandizement and to favoritism of the court was not in the interest of the people as a whole, but merely favorable to certain favored classes.

Although no rebellion was made against King Solomon, nor even protests, so far as the records show, nevertheless the people concluded that they would have a change in the kingdom during the reign of Solomon's successor, his son Rehoboam. This dissatisfaction was mainly with the ten tribes. The two tribes, in whose territory was the capital city, were satisfied with the great improvements which had come to them. King Solomon's capital city had been favored out of all pro-

portion to the remainder of the country, in its public improvements. Israelites of all the other tribes had shared in a general conscription of labor at a comparatively small compensation; and they felt that justice had not been rendered them.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

For these reasons, the coming of King Rehoboam to the throne was the signal for a protest and for a demand that the king guarantee the people against oppression—a demand very similar to that of the British public in connection with the Magna Charta. The demand of the Israelites was made at the time of the king's coronation—a time when all the tribes were supposed to participate in acknowledging their loyalty to the king. Then came the representatives of the ten tribes, with Jeroboam as a leader, saying, "Thy father Solomon made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and the heavy yoke which he put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee."

The young king bade them depart for three days and then come again. When he conferred with the old men of the kingdom, asking what he should do, they replied, "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and will serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then will they be thy servants forever." But this advice was not fully satisfactory to young King Rehoboam; so he inquired of his personal friends, younger men of his acquaintance. These gave opposite advice, saying, " Thus shalt thou speak unto this people: My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins; and now, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father has chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions"—whips with metal pieces at the end of the lash.

The thought of the younger men and of King Rehoboam, who agreed with them, was that if the king would yield, it would be merely the starting of rebellious demands which eventually would be unendurable. Their thought, therefore, was that the people should be intimidated, threatened. But the ten tribes under the leadership of Jeroboam were not intimidated. They withdrew, refusing to participate in the anointing of Rehoboam as their king. Only the representatives of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained loyal to the king.

Thus the kingdom of Israel was divided. Thereafter the ten tribes maintained the title kingdom of Israel, and the two tribes were called the kingdom of Judah, for over five hundred years—until the time of the return from Babylonian captivity of so many of all Israel as had respect to the divine promises.

Since the captivity, the name Israel has stood for the entire twelve tribes, as at first, being so used by Jesus and the Apostle; and the name Jews was similarly used for all in covenant relationship with God. The great majority never returned, but continued to live in the various provinces of Babylon throughout the world. Some of them, rejecting circumcision and dropping faith in God, were disowned of God and thus became like the remainder of the Gentile world. But others of them, remaining loyal to the Lord, and going up to Jerusalem annually to the feast, as directed by the Lord's Word, continued to be known as members of "the twelve tribes scattered abroad." Many of these were brought into contact with the Truth in the days of the Apostles.

"PRIDE GOETH BEFORE DESTRUCTION"

Lessons from the past are valuable today. Pride has been a general guide for the world which has accomplished much harm. The wealthy and those in power have ever feared the poor, so that nearly all the blessings of life which the latter have obtained have come to them only through strictest demands and threats, and little voluntarily. We are not wise enough to say that the worldly-wise have always erred in judgment in this matter. It is true that the poor and less favored are inclined to make unreasonable demands; but who can say that greater confidence in them on the part of the wealthy would not have worked general benefit? Who can say that the world might not have been further advanced had more confidence in the masses been displayed, and a greater willingness to give them even-handed justice and a larger share in the fruits of life?

The answer of King Rehoboam to the ten tribes reminds us of the present attitude of many of the learned and wealthy toward the masses. They seem to think that others will gain their cause for them; and that a recognition of the rights of the people, after the manner of the Golden Rule, would be showing the white feather, and lead on to disastrous demands wholly unendurable.

JUSTICE THE GOLDEN RULE

All will agree that the wise men advised King Rehoboam properly, to the effect that a ruler should be the servant of his people; and that if he so does faithfully, his kingdom would be enduring and his people would be blessed. Their advice amounted to an admonition that the king should observe the Golden Rule—that he should do to his people and for them as he would that they should do to him, were their conditions reversed. The Golden Rule, laid down by the great Head of Christianity, is despised and rejected as impracticable; but we hold that it has not been given a trial. Those who have had the power have always feared to trust the Golden Rule in their dealings with the people. Political parties, clamoring for something like the Golden Rule, have time and again climbed into power, only to refuse to use the rule after gaining the opportunity, contending that the conditions made it impossible.

Soon, however, the Golden Rule will have a world-wide test, and will demonstrate that it is the only rule by which human happiness can be permanently secured. This is the promise of the Bible, which tells us that Messiah's kingdom will give the world compulsory education along the lines of the Golden Rule for a thousand years. The Lord, through the prophets, the apostles and Jesus himself, testifies to the success of the Golden Rule—that it will bring in everlasting righteousness, peace, joy, blessing; and that God's favor will be upon those who thus conform to his law, giving them ultimately deliverance from sin, sickness, pain, death, and bringing the whole world of mankind to glorious human perfection, utterly destroying those who will refuse to be governed by the Golden Rule.

The result will be the glorious condition which God at the first proposed to Father Adam, but which he neglected and forfeited by disobedience. The death penalty upon Adam and his race, which has brought all our sicknesses, travails and death, has been offset by the Redeemer's sacrifice of himself, the just for the unjust; and the glorious kingdom arrangements already referred to are to be the result.

HOW TO VIEW DENOMINATIONALISM

BELOVED WATCH TOWER BRETHREN:—

By nature I was always weak, timid and fearful, but as the truth of the Lord's Word has entered my mind and heart it has given me a courage which is entirely foreign to my nature. That is but one of the ways in which the truth has made me free.

This was recently impressed upon my mind very forcefully by a conversation I had on the train with a stranger. He was apparently a minister, although he did not say so, nor did I ask him. But in the usual ministerial way he made an attack upon Brother Russell and the cause for which he stands.

This led to an extended conversation with him, in the course of which he asked me: "What opinion do you people have of our great denominations?" I said, "Are you really desirous of having that question answered?" "Yes," he said.

"I replied, "Then you shall certainly have your wish. But possibly if it were answered very directly you might charge that it was influenced by prejudice, so I am going to approach the matter from a different standpoint.

"My home is in Philadelphia, and as you know, the prominent evangelist, 'Billy' Sunday, is conducting a long series of meetings there. My father is sending me the daily papers in which are published reports of his sermons, etc., and I have been following the same very carefully.

"Pratically all the Protestant churches in the city are behind Mr. Sunday; the papers stating that as many as four hundred ministers were sometimes on the platform with him. So of all men Mr. Sunday is surely qualified to speak for these denominations. Besides which his large experience with them should enable him to say with accuracy just what are the conditions prevailing in these churches.

"In some of his sermons I note that he has a very poor opinion of the spirituality of these organizations. He scores the ministers because they have no faith. He condemns their neglect of Bible study. He says the theological seminaries are turning out infidels.

"He refers to the large amount of saloon property that belongs to church members. He enumerates all kinds of worldly doings which go on in these denominations. He would

have us believe that the moral standard of thousands high in the churches is so low as to almost stagger reason.

"Now if what Mr. Sunday says about the denominations is true they are not fit places for good, respectful people, to say nothing of true Christians. In fact, if they are only half as bad as he says, then every faithful child of God ought to get out of them as quickly as he can.

"If they are but one-quarter as bad as Mr. Sunday tells, then the only safety on the part of one who wishes to retain his faith is to get out of such spiritual pest-holes. And we must confess that Mr. Sunday's delineation of the conditions in religious organizations is true to fact.

"This is why we are glad to take a stand independent of all denominations, and advise all who are not satisfied with the conditions prevailing in these systems to follow our example. Of course, there are many who want to know why we do not remain in the churches and try to reform them. We answer them that if all the able evangelists from Moody to Sunday have been able to accomplish so little in that direction then the case is hopeless. It is like the Bible puts it, 'We would have healed her, but she could not be healed.' The disease is incurable. That is why the denominations are DYING."

The gentleman never attempted to refute my statements, but he said, "However, you must admit there has been a great revival in the way of Bible study in the past few years. Does that not look hopeful for the churches?"

I replied, "It is true that the past few years have seen the inauguration of several movements having for their object the encouragement of more Bible study. But do you know the real reason for their existence?

"When Pastor Russell first began to call attention to the extent to which the Word of God was being ignored in these denominations, his views were treated with the same scant courtesy as the Bible; and it was only a question of time until the Scriptures would have been altogether neglected.

"But as the religious leaders began to see the people listening to Pastor Russell they trembled for the effect it would have on their own prestige, just as I imagine the Pharisees must have done when they found the common people listening to the words of Jesus. And in their fears the clergy realized that they must get up some kind of substitute for Bible-study to keep the mass of mankind from listening to the one who is unquestionably the religious Reformer of this century."

The poor man had nothing more to say. He probably knew it was all too true. How glad any of us would have been to have given him the same comforting light we have, but he was not yet ready for it.

Yours in the Fellowship of the Gospel of Peace,

B. H. BARTON.

FALSE REPORTS INJURIOUS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

For some time it has seemed expedient that I write you re some field observations. You may recall that I reported while South about a year ago, that a rumor was then going the rounds of that section that Rockefeller had sent you a check for a million dollars. Since reaching the territory which I have been in for the past six weeks, I have come up against a widely circulated report that you had received another million dollars, but this time from Helen Gould. Now this report is vouched for as being authentic, for it is said to have come from some one engaged in the work, recently at Brooklyn, so he knows (they think). If such reports were not so absurd they would be laughable. How any one can give credence to such reports I cannot understand.

For about the same period of time I have been hearing that Brother Bohnet had passed beyond, and that Brothers Toole and Hersee have gone out of the truth. All these things sound to me very much like "vain babbling." At Chicago I was told that the reports coming in there from various pilgrims indicate that the friends generally are going to sleep, at least resting on beds of ease.

My observations have been quite the reverse of these reports, and you know the territory covered by me during the past eighteen months has been quite extensive. The cases of drowsiness noted by me have been rare. Generally speaking I have found the classes in good spiritual health, the friends wide-awake. Probably a more vital matter is a report throughout the same territory, just referred to, that your present thought is that the church will not be gathered until 1925. I was told that a pilgrim brother, whose name was not mentioned, had made some calculations to this effect, but before presenting them to the classes had submitted same to you and that you had returned the notes with your approval, as the story goes. So often do I find the friends forgetful of your oft-repeated statement that if you had any information to give them they might expect to find same in THE TOWER.

It seems to me that all such matters as I am repeating are worse than idle—that they are in reality harmful; for when the minds of the friends are exercised about such things they cannot be exercised about the things that would help them into the kingdom. It seemed to me that you might consider these matters of sufficient importance to warn the dear friends against them through THE TOWER.

My heart was made solemn indeed by the article in THE WATCH TOWER, "Seventy Sent Forth." The breaking of such tender ties is a great test, but we are in the testing time and cannot know what awaits us. When one member suffers, all suffer—sympathetically. Surely the end is near—all the more occasion for rejoicing. Remember me, dear Pastor, in your prayers, that I may meet you in the kingdom, even if not before. My love for you expands and grows more tender as the days pass. To my mind evidences are being multiplied to the effect that the dear Lord is still guiding you in all things pertaining to his service. Daily do I thank the Father that I am privileged to be a coworker together with you in these closing days. With abounding love and confidence,

Your brother by His kind favor, W. M. WISDOM.

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LOVE OF THE FATHER AND THE SON OUR PATTERN

(Discourse delivered by Brother Russell at the recent Convention at Oakland, Cal.)

Of the Master we are assured that at the conclusion of his earthly ministry he still dearly loved his disciples. We read, "Jesus, . . . having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." We are to draw a strict line of demarcation between the love of God which the Bible points out as applicable to all mankind, and the love of God which is conferred upon the church. In the large, broad sense of the word, the Bible assures us that "God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." However, there was nothing in the fallen man that God could really love, in the sense of fellowshiping him. Really, there was nothing in man to draw out the love of God toward him—everything rather to the contrary. And this was the reason God sentenced man at the first, immediately after his fall, declaring Father Adam not worthy of his continued love and favor, and condemned him to death.—Genesis 3:17-19.

We are not to understand that God changed his mind meantime and concluded that, after all, he did love Adam and wished that he had not condemned him to death. Rather, we are to understand that the love of God which he exercised toward the world is of the sympathetic love for a poor dog. If he had injured his paw, we would like to bind up that paw. We would have the sympathetic love. Not that we really loved that dog, but we had sympathy for it. So God's attitude toward the world is an attitude of sympathy. And he would have his people have a kind, generous feeling toward all men, and even toward the brute creation. In harmony with this the Apostle tells us that we are to do good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith.—Galatians 6:10.

The Lord makes a definite rule. We are not to class the household of faith in with the world. We are not to think of giving the world the same affection or love or interest that we give to the household of faith. Neither does God.

The love which God has for the world is entirely different from that which the Savior mentions when he says, "The Father himself loves you." This seems to me one of the most wonderful texts of the Bible—that our great God could have a love for us—so small, so unworthy of his love or attention!

This same sentiment of the Heavenly Father is reflected in the words of our text, "Jesus having loved his own, . . . he loved them unto the end." No doubt was there. We cannot think that those who were especially his own then, those who had come to him and become his followers, were the most talented people in Jewry, any more than are his disciples today. Were they especially his own because they were so well educated? Was it because they were so refined? No. Was it because the world appreciated them and would take charge of them, or because they could be raised to responsible positions in the eyes of the world? No.

WHY JESUS LOVES HIS OWN

Why did Jesus have this special love for them?—"having loved his own, he loved them unto the end." There is something important here. You and I wish to know whether the Savior loves us. His is not merely a random love. There is a principle involved. He loved them because they were his own, but not in the selfish sense that a man would love his house and his dog and his cat, because he possessed them, because he owned them. Not in that sense did Jesus call his disciples his own. His was an unselfish love. He purposed to do something for them.

What was the reason that Jesus loved and called his disciples his own? I think you are agreed with me as to the reason. He loved them because they had those qualities of heart that would make them lovable from his standpoint. I think that those qualities are ones that you may have and I may have. You and I in thinking along this line, may see and know. I am glad the Bible says that Jesus loved his own. I am glad I am one of his own and therefore can believe that Jesus loves me, not in the merely sympathetic sense that he loves the unbelieving world, but in the special sense made manifest in our text.

The quality that made Jesus love them was, I believe, first of all, their honesty. It seems to me there is no quality more estimable in the sight of God than honesty. Should not everybody be honest? I answer, Yes. Is everybody honest? Evidently not. The honesty which these disciples manifested was that they were ready to confess that they were nothing of themselves. They could not keep the law of God. They could not think of themselves as anybody. They knew, as all Jews knew, or ought to have known, that God had given them the law as the standard. They could not keep that law. They were honest enough to confess it. Their hearts were therefore in the attitude to look for something that God had to give that would be better than the Law Covenant.—Romans 7; 8:1-4.

HYPOCRISY THE GREAT SIN

Notice the great ones, the holy, the religious ones, of the Jewish nation—the scribes and Pharisees and priests. They were claiming that they kept the law; but they were not keeping the law, as Jesus pointed out. That meant that they were deceived. They were professing to keep the law. They made broad their phylacterics. They made long prayers to be seen of men. Jesus was continually reproving them. Doubtless there were many murderers, thieves and vagabonds in Palestine; yet we notice that Jesus passed all their criminality by as insignificant as compared with hypocrisy. The most serious denunciations the Master gave were toward this class. The further you and I can get away from being religious hypocrites the better. If the whole religious community professing Christ could get away from hypocrisy, it would make a great stir in the world. There is a great deal made of certain names, indicating certain religious activities by means of these names, but the names do not match the facts in the case.

The disciples were honest, confessing themselves nobodies and confessing that they were not able to do right, not able to keep God's law; and because they thus accepted God's message, speaking peace with God and telling them that they might have forgiveness of sins through him—because they had this attitude of mind, Jesus received them as his disciples. They were glad to believe the message he had to give—that he was selecting the kingdom class, to be highly exalted to bless mankind. They left all to follow him. He had taken a similar course. He had forsaken all to do the Father's will. He had given up the glorious condition which he had with the Father before the world was. As a human being he had consecrated himself at the time of his baptism, gladly, willingly, that he might do the will of the Father. Here were some, these dear disciples of his, having noted his purity and having received his message, who were glad to walk in his steps, that they likewise might do the will of the Father. Jesus declared that each of these was his mother, his sister, his brother. There was the secret of it.

NONE SO PRECIOUS AS THE LORD'S OWN

Our Lord had received these disciples as being very closely related to himself. They were the most precious ones in all the world. They were not his natural brothers and natural sisters; but because they had the Spirit of the Father, because they had his own Spirit, they were greatly beloved. Having loved his own, he continued to love them to the end.

At the conclusion of his earthly career, you remember, at the time he was thinking about them, and thinking about leaving them, he prayed to the Father about them. He said, "I pray not for the world." He was about to die for the world; but he did not pray for the world, because the salvation of the world was not yet due, in God's plan. He prayed for those that had willingly given themselves to be his disciples and to walk in his steps. He prayed that they all might be one—not that they might all be one person; they would always be different persons, but that they might all have one spirit, one mind, one heart, one disposition, that they might all be true disciples, that they might be one with the Father.

This was his prayer for them. He said that his followers should love one another as he had loved them. This is bringing it down to you and to me. It is one thing to realize the love of the Lord Jesus for us, and it is another to realize that the Father himself loved us because we have left the world and turned our backs upon sin. You may never be able to conquer all these weaknesses of yours fully, to your dying day. The Lord judges the heart, the will. He knows whether you have turned your back upon sin. He knows whether you have given up your heart entirely to do his will, to walk humbly in the footsteps of Jesus.

"The Father himself loveth you"! What would you take, my dear brother, for what that text teaches of the love of God toward us as his children? He has a love for the world. As a God, a Creator, he has the supervision of all his creatures. God has made provision for every creature, even the sparrow. But for all who have come into this loyal attitude of mind, he has love—sympathy, and more, esteem!

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD"

If we know that we came into the love of God, then let us remember, as the Apostle Jude says, that we are to keep ourselves in the love of God. You say, "Are we able to keep ourselves? Did not St. John make a mistake?" No, my dear brother, he made no mistake. We must keep ourselves in the love of God "We are not able to keep ourselves, are we?" Yes, the keeping is with you. God will never force your will. God is not now seeking those who need to be compelled. By and by, in the next age, in the Millennium, he will deal with those who need to be forced and compelled. He will deal with these that they may compare the good and its results with the evil and its results. Now the Father seeks such as worship him in spirit, drawing near to him, loving him.

It is not that we first loved him, but that he first loved us—the love we see reflected in his great plan for the uplifting of our race. And this tells us of the great God that we have. When we came into his family by surrendering our wills to him, and he begat us of his holy Spirit, we came into a precious relationship. There is nothing like it in the universe. The holy angels indeed are in God's love and favor; they never were out of it. But we who were once sinners, and who are now received back into his family, are begotten of his Spirit to the highest of all natures. How wonderful, my dear brother! I think, and so do you, that God loves us very, very much, or he would never have made such wonderful provision in the riches of his grace and in his loving kindness toward us who are in Christ Jesus. The provisions of God's grace are not only those of the future, and it is not that he will ultimately change and transform us who are now willing to will and to do his good pleasure, but we are actually being transformed today, by this love of the Father.

I believe that daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, as we think upon these things, as we consider, study out and understand the great love of God as expressed in his marvelous plan, we are getting a wonderful realization of how much "the Father himself loveth" us. But we cannot understand it fully. But the very fact that any Father would do such wonderful things for any child would imply a great deal of love.

God had love for the angels when he made them. He had love for the cherubim and the seraphim when he made them. They always will be grand characters and therefore worthy of God's love. But here is the most wonderful expression of God's love that we by faith can believe in—that God should have such love toward us who are in every way disorganized as a race. The Father looked down and beheld in this race some jewels; and he lifted these jewels up and washed them free from sin

through the merit of the Savior; and then, through their consecration, began the work of polishing these jewels and getting them ready for the mounting in effulgent glory in the resurrection morning, when he shall set these jewels in the gold of the divine nature. Surely the Father himself loveth us!

"WHAT SHALL I RENDER UNTO THE LORD?"

As the Father loves us, and as we have also the word of assurance that the Savior loves us, what now shall we do in return? What shall I render unto the Lord my God for all his benefits toward me? This is as little as we can say. If you were taken in hand by some very rich and influential person, when you were a mere waif upon the world, and if he took you into his own home and adopted you into his own family, you would say, "What a benefactor this is!" If you had a grateful heart, you would say, "All my time and influence shall go to this benefactor, to show him how much I appreciate his kindness toward me." As surely as you had a proper heart you would feel that way.

Now, then, what shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits—his love, his kindness, for the great redemption in which we share with the world, and further for the high calling which we have received to come out of the world and become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Ours is a heavenly inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away—an inheritance reserved for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. All this is ours. God has fixed it so. There is no mistaking the matter. This is a new creation. Until this Gospel age there has been no sharing of his level, so to speak; but we cannot lose our way while we follow our Guide. And in proportion as you and I appreciate what God has done for us, we surely wish to do something for him.

What can we do? You look at yourself, and I look at myself; and we say truly and honestly, "We are mere bundles of imperfection. We have nothing worthy to offer to the Lord our God." But you did offer and it was accepted. You have given all you had and the Lord has received you; otherwise you would not belong to this class at all. The Father thus loves only those who have made this consecration. They are the only ones that are in the church whose names are written in heaven. You had your will to give. You gave your little all. The Father accepted you and begat you of his Spirit; and that is the reason why you are of God's elect, and that is the reason why you can realize more fully, "The Father himself loveth you."

What shall we render? The things that you are to render and I am to render are the things we consecrated to God—the very same. That was your little all and my little all. But how shall we render our all? In everything, especially in our wills, we should seek to know the Father's will. Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. In other words, my dear brethren, in coming into God's family and making this covenant with the Lord, we have bound ourselves down. He did not bind us. We bound ourselves down, that we would have no will of our own in any matter, that we would do only his will.

BOND SLAVES OF CHRIST, YET FREE MEN

We cannot have what we please to wear. We are not even to eat what we please. We are not even to go where we please. We are not even permitted to think what we please. "Well," says one, "I never heard the like of such a bondage!" That is true, my dear brother. We are bond slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ. "And shall we never get rid of this slavery?" You can stop it any minute. All who are slaves of the Lord Jesus are voluntary slaves. You came in voluntarily; and you can just as quickly renounce it all if you please. Do you wish to do so? Oh, no! It is the most blessed bondage you were ever in! Every time you have found you had to give up your own will you found you had a greater blessing in return, more than compensating. You found all things working together for good, because you were renouncing your own will and walking in the footsteps of Jesus. Precious bondage! You found how many mistakes you made when you tried to do your own will—about your clothing, your food, and everything else. You are glad to have some general direction from One who is so wise. Because of this direction, the Apostle says of this class that they have "the spirit of a sound mind."—2 Timothy 1:7.

Our minds are all imperfect and unsound. When we are guided not by our own wills but by the Lord's will, as expressed to us in his Word, then we come to have the spirit of a sound mind. And much, much blessing has it brought us! I am sure I speak the sentiments of every one here present who is a consecrated child of God.

Gradually we come to love the Lord's way. We grow in grace and in knowledge and in the love of God, so that eventually we come to hate the things we once loved and to love the things we once despised. Thus as the Apostle describes it, We are transformed by the renewing of our minds.—Romans 12:2.

This bondage is freedom in a very important respect. (1 Corinthians 7:22) We are getting a victory over the bondage of sin; we are more victorious daily over the bondage of the weaknesses of our flesh. But this bondage to the will of the Lord is bringing us daily blessings; and ultimately it will bring us the first, the chief resurrection, of which Jesus says, "Blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection; . . . they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:6) All this will come to you and me, if we are faithful in doing the Lord's will to the extent of our ability. God never expects anybody to do beyond his ability. We are to have the glorious standard of the Lord before us, and to live as fully up to that standard as we are able. The Lord Jesus could not do more than all he was able. Being perfect he was able to do perfectly. Being imperfect we cannot do perfectly; and therefore the blood of Jesus cleanseth us, makes us clean, while we seek to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

HOW WE MAY MINISTER TO THE LORD

Here we come to another point. The Lord knew that you and I could not do anything for him. He gave us a suggestion how we might indirectly do for him. You know to what I refer. He says that we should love one another, and that in loving one another we would be expressing the love which we have for him. So the Apostle John in speaking of this same matter, from this same standpoint, says that as Christ laid down his life for us, so we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. He does not say that we should lay down our lives for everybody—for the heathen or for the world in general. No, no. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. That is the way it reads. The Lord knew how to have it written. We are to lay down our lives for the ones whom Jesus loved.

I have found some very dear children of God who seemingly found it much easier to do something for the world than for the church. That is not the proper sentiment. It is God first, the Lord Jesus next, the brethren next; and after that, all men as we have opportunity; and after that, the brute creation as we have opportunity. Brutes are to be neglected in favor of men, and the world are to be neglected in favor of the church. If we have his Spirit we will love his own.

When I speak in this way, do not understand me as meaning to countenance a partiality amongst Christians. There is something very broadening in the Bible, and I believe the members of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION are more and more attaining this love which the Lord Jesus wished us to attain. It is not whether, if they are Presbyterians, we should love them as Presbyterians, or if Methodists, we should love them as Methodists, or if Lutherans, we should love them as Lutherans. The Presbyterians love the Presbyterians; the Methodists love the Methodists; the Lutherans love the Lutherans; the Mormons love the Mormons; the Spiritualists love the Spiritualists; the Masons love the Masons; and the Odd Fellows love the Odd Fellows. But in the church of Christ there are no such lines of distinction. It is not whether a man is a Mason or not a Mason, a Methodist or not a Methodist; it is whether he is the Lord's child. We are to love those who belong to God. If the Father loves him and the Savior loves him, then we too should love him. If I do not love him there is something wrong in my attitude. I am to love what the Father loves, to love what the Savior loves.

"HE THAT LOVETH GOD, LOVETH HIS BROTHER ALSO"

"Brother Russell, if you love all the brethren, you are going to love some pretty rude characters, you are going to love some very ignorant ones, you are going to love some that are not well esteemed amongst men." I cannot help it. I am going to love all who love God. You remember that the twelve apostles, except St. Paul, were all very ordinary men. You remember that when St. Peter and St. John, two of the very brightest of the twelve, were preaching in the Temple the people perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men. Think of that! The "common people" could see it. Are these the ones Jesus loved? Yes. I suppose they cracked and broke the classic Hebrew at times. This does not mean that we should love more than others those who break the English language into pieces, but we should not allow ignorance to stand between any brother or sister and our love. We should see to it that we love all who are in fellowship with our Lord.

This is the reason they are commended to our love—because they have his spirit, regardless of whether they are from the highest or the lowest ranks of society. If the Father himself has accepted them into his family, and the Father loves them,

that is reason enough for you and me that we should love them. We ought to love the brethren. How much? It is a very long step the Apostle sets before us—we ought to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. Our commission is not to preach to the world, but merely to such as have "an ear to hear" and a desire to find God. In addressing the public we shall be sure in nearly every case to find some who are the Lord's children, and who need assistance in the good way, or some who are feeling after God and desire to become his children. Merely to have a harangue to interest the world is no part of our mission whatever. Our commission is the gathering out of the church, the bride of Christ.

Suppose some of those who profess to be consecrated to God are very, very weak indeed every way? Very well, my dear brother, perhaps the Lord sees you are weak and that you get into trouble too. Do you not know that he has many things to overlook in you? We are to be of as little trouble to others as possible, but we are to bear with the infirmities of the weak brethren and not merely to please ourselves. Let me repeat. We are to bear with their weaknesses and infirmities, and not to please ourselves. How much that means! I trust we are learning this. I am merely pointing out what you all know, that the love of God is the fulfilling of the divine requirement, and that this love is to manifest itself toward those whom he acknowledges as his children and receives into his family. If I see that any man has God's fellowship, I dare not deny my fellowship.

WE MUST FELLOWSHIP WHOM GOD FELLOWSHIPS

I think of a story told about a New York banker, that might illustrate the point. He was an upright man. This banker had a friend living at a distance, who, wishing to give his son a start in life, gave him a letter of introduction to the banker. He wrote, "If you can introduce my son into the business world, it will be quite a favor to me." This wealthy man of Wall Street had very great confidence in his friend; and he perceived, when he looked at the young man, that he was a noble character. Then he thought about what he could do to get him established in business. Without comment, he said, "Come, let us take a little walk"; and they walked arm in arm down Wall street and Bond street and New street and back again to the office. The young man waited a while in nervous expectancy. Then, noting that the banker was apparently not expecting to do anything more, he said, "Is there anything you can do to introduce me?" And the banker replied, "It is not necessary. The fact that I had you on my arm and led you down these streets will be a sufficient introduction to the business men of this vicinity." And the young man found it so.

So when God takes hold of a man, and we see him in God's company, we know God is willing to introduce him, and it gives him a standing with you and me. He is one of the brethren, because "the Father himself loveth" him; the Father himself recognizes him as one of his family. Then you and I should be willing to do anything for him that we are able. It is the Father's will that we should cooperate with him in assisting the brethren in every possible way. There are various trials and difficulties for these brethren that you and I know about. All the soldiers of the cross have a narrow way, a battle with the world and with the flesh and with the adversary. You and I have battles due to the fallen condition of our own flesh. What sympathy it should give us with all other soldiers in the battle! There are the two captains. All who are on the Lord's side or who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus belong to our army. Whether learned or ignorant, black or white, rich or poor, it is our privilege to love our brethren.

HAST THOU LOVE? THEN SHOW IT NOW

I believe this is as good a thought as we can have as we close this convention. The Master said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20) We are now down at the end of the age, "Only waiting till the dawning is a little brighter grown," only waiting till we pass beyond the veil, till we are joined to the Savior on the other side of the veil. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." No opportunity after that of helping the brethren! All the brethren will have been helped. They will all have passed then where they will need no help. The time when we can encourage one another, and give a helpful look, or a warm clasp of the hand, and can show our fellowship in the sufferings of the present time, is now.

I hope we are all learning more and more this lesson of love; and I hope our hearts are opening more and more widely, as we come to see the glorious character of our Father and of our Savior, and come to receive of the Master's image, reflected in us more and more. The Apostle says that by looking on Jesus we are changed, we are transformed from glory to glory, in the present life. As we thus go on from one stage of heart development to another, from one step of glory to another, on this side of the veil, we are making the necessary progress, and we will be ready for the great final step, the final stage, when we shall see him as he is and share his glory.

My dear brethren, do we not believe that all these things are nigh, even at the door? The Master said, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads and rejoice; for your deliverance draweth nigh." Are we rejoicing properly? Are we lifting up our heads and rejoicing to tell the world the sweet old story of the Savior's love and of God's love? Do not tell them too much of the coming trouble. Tell them about the silver lining of the cloud. "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief."

THE WORLD WAKING UP

The most wonderful inquiries are coming in that we have ever known. People everywhere are saying, "What do these things mean? These are the things you Bible Students have been talking about for years." They begin to "take knowledge." They may not all give their hearts to the Lord now. The right thought to leave with the inquirer is that he should enter into a covenant with the Lord, before he can have any favors present or future. The point of every discussion and every argument, to one who is not already consecrated, is that the time is limited, and that the only proper course for anybody to take is, as the Apostle suggests, to present his body a living sacrifice, his reasonable service.

I feel that we do well to keep this always in mind. You can never get people to understand all about the doctrines. The Lord never meant anybody to understand all these things except the brethren. "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." They were meant for such—for you, who have come into the family of God. These things are for you to understand. When you find that people are interested, press the point about their getting into the ark of safety, getting into the family of God, getting to be members of the body of Christ, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus.

PARTING WORDS

As we leave here today, we do so with the thought that we may meet again as a convention, or perhaps we may not meet again. It is not for you or for me to be dictatorial. The Bible indicates that the Gentile Times have ended. Their kings have had their day. They have made a good showing, in many respects. Many of these governments have done wonderfully. Take the government of Germany. It seems to me that the present Emperor of Germany has done wonderful things for his nation, which forty years ago was a very stupid people. Today they have become very bright, very intelligent, very well educated people, amongst the brightest in the whole world. This came partly in connection with their militarism. They were getting lessons in reading and writing and arithmetic while learning military discipline. Much might be said in favor of all these Gentile governments, as well as against them all. Yet when they have done their best, they have done little. Have the nations been able to lift up mankind to full perfection? No. Have the doctors been able to lift up mankind? No. Would the United States ever be able to do so? No. On the contrary, with all the increasing intelligence, we see the cataclysm of dissolution and anarchy coming. But all the trouble will be as nothing in comparison with the blessings that shall come when the Sun of Righteousness is revealed. But the portal of trouble must first be passed. And it will be a very helpful experience to all the world, as they shall be brought down to the place where they will look to the Lord as their Helper. Man's extremity will become God's opportunity.

Then, my brethren, let us be faithful to the light God has given us. Let us live the truth every day, "showing forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." I hear of many who have received a blessing from the daily reading of the Vow; others through reading the Morning Resolve. I believe we cannot too fully surround ourselves with helpful influences. We need to fortify. We need to get ourselves strengthened by the divine might in the inner man, that we may be able to resist those things that are contrary to us as new creatures. Let us then suggest the keeping of these resolves, and thus living near to God.

A good many also have written in about the article that appeared in THE WATCH TOWER lately on love. A brother wrote, "Since reading that article I have been trying to be more gentle, more kind, more considerate of others, and to practise these things; and I am finding a great blessing as I endeavor to put these principles into practise. I find it easier to be meek and kind and gentle in word and action." I believe the Lord today would have his people do as much polishing up of their characters as possible, so that it may not be necessary for

him to give us, through disciplinary providences in our lives, the polishing we need. If we would polish ourselves, we would not need to be polished by the Lord.

Those who are putting on the graces of the Spirit, are all receiving God's special assistance, and are working together with God (2 Corinthians 6:1); for this is God's work. As the Bible says, "Ye are God's workmanship." If he works in us to will and to do, it is to do what he has given us in his Word as his will. His present purpose is the taking out from amongst mankind of a saintly class that are to share the nature of Christ and share with him the kingdom of the future, through which the world will be blessed.

We have in our office stock some vow cards—book-marks. Many of you have them, no doubt. The vow is on one side and a beautiful little poem on the other. Those who have taken this vow form the most wonderful prayer circle the church has ever known. Think of it, that approximately 15,000 have sent in their names to that effect! And we have reasons for believing that the number of those who have taken it is double this. However, at least 15,000 are praying daily for one another. You will find them in whatever part of the world you go—whether in China, or Japan, or Korea, or Colombia, or the Isthmus of Panama, or Scandinavia, or Finland, or Russia. Everywhere you will find those who have taken this vow, and who read it daily, and who remember one another in their prayers. I think that is one of the most wonderful things in the world in all the church's history. Never before were so many of God's children praying for each other.

A LETTER OF DEEP INTEREST

I have something to read to you. It is a translation of a letter. It was written in Hungarian, to a Slav brother in the United States, and was forwarded to us. A portion of the letter follows:

"A Hungarian soldier, injured on the battlefield, was returned home wounded. He was there met by some of our brethren, and later was led to diligent and earnest study of the Scriptures, and finally made his consecration to the Lord. This he symbolized last January, at the hands of our dear Brother Szabo. A few days later he was obliged to return to the front and to the trench, in Galicia. A cannon shot burned the cap from his head; earth caved in upon him. He was dug out by his comrades, and again sent to the hospital. This brought the dear brother into our midst again, but for a short time only. Presently he had to return to the firing line again.

"This time they came within 800 feet of the Russian line, and they received the command, 'A bayonet charge!' The Hungarian brother was at the end of the left wing. He sought only to protect himself from the enemy, hence endeavored merely to knock the bayonet from the hand of the Russian with whom he was confronted. Just then he observed that the Russian was endeavoring to do likewise; and instead of using his opportunity to pierce his opponent, the Russian let his bayonet fall to the ground; he was weeping. Our brother then looked at his 'enemy' closer—and he recognized a 'Cross and Crown' pin on his coat! The Russian, too, was a brother in the Lord! The Hungarian brother also wore a 'Cross and Crown' emblem—on his cap.

"The two brethren quickly clasped hands and stepped aside. Their joy was overflowing, that our Heavenly Father had permitted them to meet even on the field of the enemy! They could not understand one another's speech, but by signs they conversed, taking out their Bibles—and the Russian had the SCRIPTURE STUDIES in his pocket with a song book, all bound in one volume, and a photo of Brother Russell. The brother then took the bayonet of the Russian brother, and gave him over as a prisoner of war; and he still remains as such in Hungary, while the Hungarian brother has now been sent to the hospital for the third time."

While there are not many rich or noble amongst the Lord's brethren, yet when it comes to telling the truth, they manage it very well!

In Germany, Great Britain, and all over Europe, our people have been conscious for years that this war was coming on. They have been writing to me and continually inquiring how they should proceed if they were drafted or went into the army. In volume six of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, the friends are instructed to avoid taking life. If they were ever drafted into the army they should go. If they could be sent to the Quartermaster's Department to take care of the food, that would be desirable, or into the hospital work. They should endeavor to get such positions. They could not be expected to do service in the way of killing. If they were obliged to go on the firing line, they could shoot over the enemy's head, if they wished.

And that is the way these brethren did; each had this same thought in mind. This letter shows the love of the brethren even on the field of battle, and in the enemy's land, with carnal weapons. It made no difference that one was a Hungarian and the other a Russian!

How different in the nominal churches! In this war Presbyterians and Methodists, Anglicans, Romanists and others, all fight. In Great Britain they have placed a kind of premium upon marriage, saying that those who marry and bring up children, ready for future wars will be helping along their country—"God's kingdom." They have a different brand of Christianity from the Bible brand. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the one who is giving this advice, may think he is doing his duty, but there is something confusing his mind.

OUR TIMES IN GOD'S HANDS

We do not know whether we who are here today shall meet again in the flesh or not. What matters it? We are fully content, either to live or to die—whatever his providence may direct in respect to us. "My times are in thy hands; my God, I wish them there"—that expresses it beautifully, does it not? We wish to have the Lord's will done in respect to the time of our change, and in respect to all we enjoy together daily—it is all committed to him. Our wills are entirely dead. His will is to rule in your body and in mine, and in all of us. I hope, dear brethren, that a great blessing has come to the classes of Oakland, San Francisco, Alameda and surrounding classes, from this convention. I hope that as they go to their homes with their hearts overflowing with the comfort of the truth, they will carry blessings on to others; and that, like the widow's cruse of oil, the more they give away, the more they will have left for themselves.

Let us all here who have been enjoying the favors of the Lord go forth filled with the Spirit, filled with love and loyalty and fidelity to the Lord, that we may carry blessings to others. I shall be going on my way shortly, up along the Coast, as far as British Columbia, then eastward, and finally back to Brooklyn, and July 4th shall be at the New York City Temple. Let our great prayer circle draw us each nearer to the other, that thus we may be sanctified with the truth and "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

QUESTION MEETING—OAKLAND CONVENTION

(Conducted by Brother Russell)

Question.—Do we, the church, receive our full share in the anointing instantly or gradually?

Answer.—The expression, "anointing of the Spirit," is slightly different from the expression, "begetting of the Spirit." The thought connected with the word "begetting" is that of an instantaneous work, while the thought connected with "anointing" is a more gradual work. We are under the process of anointing from the time we enter the Lord's family, from the time we are recognized as members of the family of Christ, and receive a place in the glorious company of royal priests. We know that some fail to get their full anointing. Some of those who have been properly received, and begotten of the holy Spirit, will fail to be fully anointed, and therefore will fail to be of the royal priesthood class. They will be of the great company class instead. We therefore think that the expression, "anointing of the Spirit," must include that mollifying and mellowing development which comes as we grow in grace and in knowledge, and not merely the time when we were anointed (begotten) to come into the family of God.

CHANGE OF FEET-MEMBERS ONE BY ONE

Question.—Is there any Scripture which shows that the feet-members of Christ will all be changed at one time?

Answer.—We believe to the contrary—that instead of all the feet-members being changed at one time, it will be a gradual work. One may be changed tonight, another tomorrow, etc.; and yet their change may be said to be all at one time in the sense that it is all in the harvest time, all in the end of the age. The change of some will be in the close of the harvest period. As an individual matter, it will be one person after another. The Apostle says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Our change will be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." It will not be a gradual change to the individual, but an instantaneous change. Instead of sleeping, as the saints of the past have done, when our time comes to die, ours will be an instantaneous change. The Psalmist prophetically says, "I have said, ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High. But ye shall die like men"; and this Scrip-

ture we understand to refer to the dying process that comes to all of the church, the same as to mankind in general. We are new creatures, and hence the expression that we shall "die like men." As men die, so we will die. Men do not generally die in bunches; so we would think it strange if many of us should die at one time. The world will not discern any difference between our death and the death of other men.

SIN-OFFERING MADE BY HIGH PRIEST

Question.—For what sins do the church suffer?

Answer.—The members of the church suffer for any sins of the flesh they do not properly repent of and properly make amends for. The Apostle says that if we would judge ourselves, if we would punish ourselves, correct ourselves, we would not be judged of the Lord. If we would thoroughly attend to these matters ourselves, we would not need to be chastened by the Lord. When he finds it necessary to deal with us, it is that we may not be condemned with the world.

The whole world is in a condemned condition. God is choosing some who will be justified to life everlasting on the spirit plane. If we are faithful it will not be necessary for the Lord to punish us, but rather to encourage and help us. This would not mean that we shall not have trials and difficulties, but it does mean that if we chasten ourselves we shall not be punished by the Lord for our sins, for the weaknesses of our flesh which we might have avoided, and for which we are to some extent responsible.

We are not to suppose that a new creature would sin wilfully. If he thus sinned, he would be no longer a new creature. He would have gone back, like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. The sins that the new creature would suffer for would be those sins of the flesh which he might have avoided, and which he failed to correct. These sufferings would give him a sharper appreciation of his duties; they would be disciplining for his good.

But this may not be the thought of the questioner. He may mean, "What has the church to do with the sin-offering?" The church has nothing to do with the sin-offering, as a church. It is the Lord Jesus who is the responsible one in the whole matter. In the type it was not the under priests that did the offering, but the high priest. So it was the Lord Jesus that offered up himself. He offers us up as his members, but he does not do this contrary to our wills. We desire that he will offer us up as parts of himself, that we may thus have a share in "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that shall follow." It is his merit alone that gives virtue to our sacrifice.

The whole responsibility, therefore, is in the hands of the great High Priest, our Lord. We share with him in the world's sin-offering, as his members. We participate in the sufferings which are counted as his sufferings. You and I could not atone for sins by our sufferings—either for our own sins or for those of others. That is all in the Lord's hands.

CHRISTIANS' SUFFERING DIVINELY SUPERVISED

Question.—Do the sufferings that we experienced before coming into present truth benefit us as Christians?

Answer.—I do not know what the questioner had in mind. The question seems to imply that he refers to a class already Christians. If that is his thought, and he refers to the sufferings we have as Christians before we receive the light of present truth, I would say, "Yes." All the sufferings of a Christian are under divine supervision, and many of us, I believe, before coming into present truth, had certain experiences of trials and difficulties that worked out for us a great blessing, and prepared us to receive the truth. I have known many who have given me their experiences along this line. They were so engrossed in business that they would not have taken the time to study the truth.

I knew a gentleman in the grocery business, for instance. He was a Christian, and had purchased the six volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. But he could not take time to study them. He did not realize that the greatest business in the world is the Lord's business. The grocery business was his greatest business for the time being. The Lord very graciously let him break his leg. He had to remain quiet until the bones were knit. He told me afterwards that his enforced vacation was the best time in his life; for he read the six volumes. Before that he had never had time; after that he always had time.

It was the same with a certain sister. This sister said to me one day, "I wondered at one time very much why the Lord let my hands get all crippled up with rheumatism. I had always been very active up to that time, knitting or sewing or doing something else. Then my hands became all knotted up with rheumatism, as you see them. I could not sew or knit or do anything else; my hands were useless. Finally, I found that, by trying, I could manage to turn over the leaves of a book; and I began to read. After reading awhile, the thought came to me, God let your hands twist up like that so you could read."

These are some of the ways in which various ones of the Lord's people were blessed and helped to come into present truth. God has a way of dealing with his children. If we are his, then the next thing is to be fully submissive to his will and to be glad to follow his providences.

Question.—Is it manifesting the spirit of Babylon to have the Photo-Drama of Creation exhibited in a theater after the theater manager has just shown his regular production?

Answer.—It would not seem that way to me. If so it would be wrong to talk to a man about the truth after he had been hearing some bad talk. This would seem like reasoning in a circle. Each one has a right, however, to use his own judgment. If any of you are in the Photo-Drama work, do not do anything to hurt your conscience. As for me, I would be glad to show the Drama to 5,000 after they had attended a regular theater, if I had the opportunity.

PROPER AND IMPROPER ADVERTISING

Question.—Is it showing the spirit of Babylon to solicit advertising contracts from merchants for space on Photo-Drama announcements?

Answer.—It would not be proper to say to a merchant, "Advertise with us and thus contribute something to a good cause." That would not do. It would be begging for the Lord's cause, a thing we are not authorized to do. But if I were a merchant and had an opportunity to put an advertisement into a Photo-Drama announcement, I would think it would be one of the best chances of advertising I ever had. I would think I was receiving a benefit. If for $1 or $2 I could have my business card circulated all over the neighborhood, I would say, "These little leaflets showing about the Drama will interest the people; and while reading the notes about the pictures, they will also read about my business." I would think I had good value for my money. If any man thought that he was not getting good value he ought not to put his advertisement in. It is a purely business transaction.

In soliciting the advertisement, one should not mention the religious feature. We do not do this at all. It is purely business, so far as the merchants are concerned; and I would let them advertise all that they choose. The fact that we do not permit advertisements in THE WATCH TOWER does not signify that to do so would be wrong. I see nothing wrong in a merchant's advertising his wares. If I were publishing a daily newspaper, I would expect to sell advertising space.

A brother who owns a newspaper consulted me a little about his advertising. He said that the merchants in his vicinity were accustomed to advertise, and that some of the best advertisers were dealers in liquor and tobacco. I told him that I would not put any liquor advertisements in. I would put in advertisements of shoes or clothing or groceries or hardware, and would solicit such advertising, if I were running a newspaper. I see nothing wrong in advertisements or in newspapers. I would see nothing wrong in putting six or eight pages of advertisements into THE WATCH TOWER if the articles advertised were staples that every one wanted to buy. But since THE WATCH TOWER goes into the home and represents me in a special way, I like to have all the space used for religious matter —not, however, because the advertisements would be wrong.

Once we put into THE WATCH TOWER a notice about Miracle Wheat. Many of you saw it. We believe we did right in putting that notice in. We also put in a notice about some kind of beans and one about some special cotton. Some of the friends were benefited by each of these notices. We also put in a notice recently about a cure for cancer. We have had hundreds of letters come in from truth friends, and hundreds from others; and a great many have reported good results. To some extent this has helped forward the truth. People saw that we were not trying to get their money, saw that we were trying to do them good, and became interested.

Question.—Is it showing the spirit of Babylon to co-operate in methods promulgated from I. B. S. A. headquarters, Brooklyn, without closely scrutinizing those methods?

Answer.—I would think that each one would have to use his own judgment about this matter. If anybody had been very badly "stung," he should be very much on his guard. If he had not been "stung," he would properly not be so much on his guard. It is quite right to use your own judgment about the matter. So far as the headquarters at Brooklyn is concerned, and my own identification with the work there, let me say: everything is under my supervision. Nothing emanates from there contrary to my conscience. But you must use your consciences. While there are many wise and capable brethren at the Brooklyn office, yet by present arrangement they are my assistants under my general supervision as long as I live. That was the arrangement made when I turned my property over to

the Society, years ago. This applies also to the Society's work in foreign lands.

TRUE DEFINITION OF BABYLON

Question.—If the I. B. S. A. headquarters should promulgate methods not understood or approved by us are we to apply Rev. 18:4, "Come out of her, my people," and if so, how?

Answer.—I think if the I. B. S. A. can be shown to be a section of Babylon, we all ought to get out of it. If we all get out on the same side, where shall we be then? I think we shall be pretty close together if all get out on the same side.

The word "Babylon" signifies "confusion," and in Revelation 18:4, it is used in reference to mixing the things of God and of men. There was a time when, throughout Europe, the kingdoms came very much under the influence of the Roman Catholic church. To some extent those kingdoms came under the influence of Christianity—to the extent that there was Christianity in the Roman Catholic church.

It is well to emphasize that there was a time when the Roman Catholic church was the only church in the world, and when people knew no better than to be in it and of it. Where would they have been, otherwise? Then there came a time when the church officials, those who were high in the church management, succeeded in coming into affiliation with the Roman Empire; and the Roman church became its successor. Then the church of Rome began to sway the nations and to tell the people of this or that principality, "Your king is not in harmony with us. You can select another one." Then there would be a revolution. The Pope and the Catholic church were back of these changes. That is the way it began. There is where the illicit marriage of the nominal church and the world took place.

In many European nations this has now been gradually changed. In some the church and the state are completely separated. But this change has not been made in Austro-Hungary. The people are strictly under the control of the Roman Catholic church. The church has to do with everything. In Great Britain, the representatives of the church of England sit in Parliament, as part of the Government. The church bishops are members of the House of Lords. In Germany and Sweden, it is very much the same. Their government and God's government are lined together in the minds of the people.

This state of things God calls Babylon—the professed church of Christ being married to worldly governments. These have been called Christian governments by mistake. They are not Christian. Look at present conditions in Europe. The governments at war are not manifesting the Spirit of Christ. There are Christians in all these governments, but the governments themselves are not Christian. The nominal church has been responsible for this state of things. The situation has so warped men's minds that they think their present course the right one. They think that Christ is now reigning. In their minds the reigning king and the parliament represent God on earth. The Lord would have us separate from all this.

There is another way in which the spirit of Babylon manifests itself; as, for instance, in the Protestant churches—Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, etc. They pander to the worldly spirit. They take note of the rich, trying to work in with the rich and get the rich into positions in the church. Thus they recognize money above spirituality. In many cases money runs the church. That is not the basis under which the true church operates. There is a system in connection with all of them, even in the Baptist church, the most liberal of all.

The Baptists will say, "We are in no bondage; we have no ecclesiastical control at all." They do not realize that the spirit of Babylon has gotten into the church. Suppose we have here a congregation of Baptists. As a congregation they call their own minister and attend to their own affairs. A certain minister, then, Brother A., is called to serve them. But he must be ordained as pastor of this congregation. So they send for some other Baptist ministers—say Brother B., Brother C., and Brother D. to ordain him. But Brother A. does not stand in very well with the ministers called to do the ordaining. So they say, "We will not ordain Brother A.; he is irregular." And the congregation ask, "You cannot ordain him?" Then they reply, "We have nothing at all against Brother A., but we will not ordain him." So you see the preachers have the rule, and the people do not know it.

The Baptists will tell you that the preachers have no authority at all. But the Baptists cannot do a thing without the consent of the preachers; this they do not seeem to know. The preachers hold a power that God did not repose there. God never authorized any men to go and ordain another man to preach the Gospel. God does the ordaining; and it is for the church to decide, according to its best judgment, whom the Lord ordains or calls as a pastor. All this ordination by men is Babylonish, a species of machinery to manage the people. It is all worked just like politics.

Nevertheless the Baptists are the nearest free, of all so-called "orthodox" sects. The people in the Methodist church have almost no liberty, except the privilege of giving money. That is the principal liberty they enjoy. The bishops rule in co-operation with the presiding elders. At each annual conference the presiding elder and the bishop have it fixed what minister is to go here and what one there. The minister that does not stand by the presiding elder will go to the country place which pays only $400; while the one who does stand by him, though no more capable, will be sent to a place that pays $1,000 or more. I have had several Methodist ministers tell me this. They complain about it, but do not want to get out of a job altogether. That is not the liberty wherewith Christ makes free. I realize that this is a system. Let me show you what a system it is. The bishops control the presiding elders, and under them the presiding elders control the preachers; and so it is all the way down to the class leaders. They have their head or chief amongst them. They have a human head. The General Conference is the highest authority.

So the Presbyterian church has a head in the way of a General Assembly which has the deciding of matters. All this is according to the course of this world. The simplicity of Christ is not generally observed, except amongst the friends of the International Bible Students Association. There it is very general, and the Word of God is observed. They learn to take notice when things are going wrong. The simplicity of the matter is evident to all.

On one occasion I was called upon by a minister of the Reformed church. He wanted to know how I managed my church. I said to him, "Brother ———— I have no church." He said, "You know what I mean." I answered, "I want you to know what I mean too. We claim that there is only one church. If you belong to that church, you belong to our church." He looked at me in surprise. Then he said, "You have an organization; how many members are there?" I replied, "I cannot tell; we do not keep any membership rolls." "You do not keep any list of the membership?" "No. We do not keep any list; their names are written in heaven." He asked, "How do you have your election?" I said, "We announce an election; and any or all of God's people, who are consecrated and are accustomed to meet with this company, or congregation, may have the privilege of expressing their judgment of who would be the Lord's preference for elders and deacons of the congregation." "Well," he said, "that is simplicity itself." I then added, "We pay no salaries; there is nothing to make people quarrel. We never take up a collection." "How do you get the money?" he asked. I replied, "Now, Dr. ————, if I tell you what is the simplest truth you will hardly be able to believe it. When people get interested in this way, they find no basket placed under their nose. But they see there are expenses. They say to themselves, 'This hall costs something, and I see that free lunch is served between meetings, for those living at some distance. How can I get a little money into this thing, anyway?'" He looked at me as if he thought, "What do you take me for—a greenhorn?" I said, "Now, Dr. ————, I am telling you the plain truth. They do ask me this very question, 'How can I get a little money into this cause?' When one gets a blessing and has any means, he wants to use it for the Lord. If he has no means, why should we prod him for it?"

There would be nothing to come out of, as an organization, if one is an International Bible Student. You cannot get out of anything you have not gone into. If any one can tell me how he got into Babylon by getting interested in the affairs of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, let him show me how he will jump out, and I will jump with him.

ISRAEL'S PRIESTS DIED TYPICALLY

Question.—Please explain Hebrews 9:27: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

Answer.—This is explained better, perhaps, in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES than I can take time to explain it here. It is difficult to explain a matter like this in three to five minutes, because the whole thought has gotten into people's heads upside down and back end first. They all think it refers to the time when people die. The Apostle Paul, in that statement in Hebrews, is giving a lesson on type and antitype. He is comparing the work of the Jewish priests every year with the work of Christ, and telling how these earthly priests went into the Holy, and afterwards into the Most Holy. The priest took with him the blood of a bullock, then of a goat. He went into the Holy; and, after the cloud of incense had passed through the second veil and covered the Mercy-Seat, he went into the Most Holy, representing heaven itself.

The antitype is that our Lord Jesus offered up himself as

the bullock. The bullock represented Jesus as a man; the goat represented the human nature of the church. As High Priest, Jesus slew the bullock; at baptism he offered the sacrifice of his humanity. The typical priest took his two hands full of incense and crumbled it in the fire on the incense altar—that represented the three and one-half years of our Lord's ministry. This picture of the incense falling upon the fire represented the glorious qualities of Jesus as He came in contact with the trials of life. In every case His faithfulness yielded a sweet perfume.

When Satan came to Him with temptations, His loyalty was an offering of sweet odor to God. When he had the suggestion come to Him to avoid giving what He had agreed to give, He put temptation away and would have nothing to do with it. "The cup that My Father hath poured for Me shall I not drink it?" was ever His sentiment. The sweet incense went before Him and appeared in the presence of God before He finished His course at Calvary. His death upon the cross was the last crumb of incense falling unto the fire, in the antitype. Then our High Priest went under the veil—into death. He was parts of three days under the veil, arising on the other side of the veil on the third day. This was the resurrection of Jesus. He arose on the spirit side of the veil, a spirit being. Then forty days later, He sprinkled upon the Mercy-Seat in the Most Holy, in heaven, the blood of Atonement on behalf of the church.

The Apostle here is trying to get the Church to see that the Jewish high priest did something of this kind in type. The Jewish high priest went into the Most Holy of the Tabernacle, not without blood. That blood, in every case, represented the blood of the high priest—his life. Every high priest, when he passed under that veil on the Day of Atonement, was in danger of being stricken dead. If he had not done perfectly, according to the requirements of the Lord, he would have died as he attempted to pass that veil, under that curtain. And so it would have been death to Jesus if He had not done perfectly the will of the Father.

Then the Apostle declares, "It is appointed unto men [men-priests—get the thought] once to die [typically, in passing under the veil] and after that the judgment," or decision. They typified their death in the sacrifice of the bullock, and carrying its blood under the veil. If the priest had not done it perfectly, he died. The bullock represented the priest. After he had sacrificed it he passed with its blood under the second veil. "After death the judgment." There is no reference here to the death of mankind, but merely to these priests offering their sacrifice. Jesus died, passed the second veil, and was raised on the third day. After the high priest in the type had made his offering, and had passed beyond the second veil, and sprinkled the blood upon the Mercy-Seat, he came out and blessed the people.

Our Lord Jesus, the great High Priest, has not yet come out to bless the people. The antitype is a very large thing. Jesus went under the veil into the Heavenly Holy over eighteen hundred years ago. He has not yet appeared for the blessing of the world. But "To those that look for him, He shall appear a second time, not as a Sin-Offering, but unto salvation." This is the best I can do on this question in the limited time I can give here.

Question.—Does not the attainment of the Divine nature mean attainment to the image of God in which man in the beginning was created? Does not the word nature here have the significance of disposition, character?

Answer.—It does not! Man never had the Divine nature. The Apostle Paul points out, in discussing this subject of natures, in connection with the resurrection, that there is one flesh of fish, another of beasts, another of birds, and another of men. The fish does not have the same kind of flesh the bird has. We all know the difference. The flesh of fish, and of birds, and of beasts, is all different.

Then comes man, the highest of all the earthly beings. The Apostle also calls our attention to higher forms of existence; he calls our attention to another plane of life. He shows that man, the highest of the earthly creatures, is lower than the lowest of the spiritual beings. He tells us about angels, principalities, powers, and the divine nature, the highest of all. The perfect human being is God manifest in the flesh. It is as close to divine nature as the flesh could come. It represents the divine nature as nearly as is possible for a human being. The angels are also in God's image or likeness; the cherubim and seraphim as well, though on a higher scale than man. The highest of all is the divine nature. That nature only God had originally. And that kind of spirit nature which God has he gave to Jesus at his resurrection, as a reward for his faithfulness. Jesus did not have it before he became a man; but as the Father has inherent life, i. e. life in himself, not a life derived from food and water, "So hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself." We cannot understand that kind of life. I cannot imagine how God could give a life that has no need of anything to sustain it. You never had any experience along that line. I never had. We would have been as great as God is to fully comprehend him.

We see the difference between apprehending and comprehending. To comprehend is to take in fully. To apprehend is to touch or lay hold upon. You and I can apprehend, or lay hold of God, but not very clearly, because we are so little and he is so great. We cannot comprehend God. We can simply touch him, or apprehend him.

The Apostle dwelt upon this matter; he was apprehending, or touching God, as God had apprehended or touched him. God has laid hold of us, come in touch with us. We do not come in touch with God and say, "We will have him for our God." He laid hold upon us and told us about his arrangement for us. We were responsive to it; we thought how wonderful that he would thus take notice of us. So we are seeking to apprehend that for which we are apprehended of God. Man was not created in God's image in the sense that he is of the Divine nature, which is far above cherubim and seraphim, while man is a little lower than even angels.

Question.—Cannot Revelation 7:9-17 be applied to the saved world of mankind, rather than to a Great Company class? Is there not a very serious danger in teaching that there is to be a Great Company on the spirit plane, and that those who lack a thorough appreciation of the High Calling, and a consecration thereto, will be saved notwithstanding?

Answer.—It would be very dangerous for any person who does not see a thing to presume to teach it. The questioner evidently does not understand this subject, and that cuts the answer short. When we leave a subject as the Lord puts it, we have it right. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my Word, let him speak My Word faithfully." "We speak that we do know." This is the privilege that we intend to have until we die. It is not?

"IT WILL SURELY COME—IT WILL NOT TARRY"

Question.—What does Habakkuk 2:3 mean? "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; for it will surely come; it will not tarry."

Answer.—This is explained on the first page of every issue of THE WATCH TOWER. God has provided in his Word a great vision, a great revelation. It is a picture, so to speak. He has given this picture of his plan more or less clearly through the prophets and through the law. The Jubilees prefigured Restitution to all the world. Other features of the Law, such as the Atonement Day sacrifices, etc., pictured other features of God's Plan. The Passover represented still other parts. These pictures were all harmonized into one great picture, or view—God's great plan to bless the world. "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," God declared to Abraham. All this went to make up the great vision, or picture, that God purposed to give his people.

In proportion as we come to have the mind of God, we can understand more and more clearly what these things mean. The most important part of the picture was that Messiah would come, and that he would set up his kingdom. All of these promises would be parts of that great view, or vision. Its fulfilment would seem to tarry long. Does it seem as though God had forgotten that promise to Abraham? the Prophet seems to query. It has sometimes seemed as though God had forgotten it. "But," declares the Prophet, "it will surely come; it will not tarry." It does not really tarry. There might be various times when we would expect to see more than we do see. We may have expected to see more of the trouble upon the world before this. The year 1915 is now more than half gone, and I think it very doubtful whether we shall see all we had expected in this year. It looks as though we were trying to hasten the fulfilment of the vision.

But the vision is still for an appointed time; and we are not to give it up. We trust ourselves to God's arrangement. It was not the Lord's way to have everything go off in October, 1914. I do not know how much may yet happen between now and October, 1915. If I were to give a guess, I would not be able to see how our expectations could all be realized between now and October, 1915. I hope they will. I shall wait longer than October, if necessary. The vision is sure. All these blessed things are positively certain to come; it is simply a matter of his time and of our understanding of his time. When you and I have fully grasped the main features of all this matter, we are surely close to it. It was a very close hit that this time of trouble began near October, 1914, and it is going on now at high speed. None of the prayers that it may stop are being answered. If the time of the world war had been merely a guess, it would certainly have been a great hit. It would have

been a miracle. We have come very close to it, if not exactly.

Question.—Pastor Russell says, "The children of Israel's journey through the wilderness toward the land of Canaan was typical of the Christian's journey through this world of sin toward the Heavenly Canaan." Typical Israel did all their fighting after they got into the land of Canaan. Where is the antitypical Canaan, and what are the antitypical Canaanites, and how are they fought by antitypical Israel.

Answer.—The Apostle Paul intimates that this whole matter of Israel's history was typical of the experience of Christians. (1 Corinthians 10:11, margin) But we need to be very cautious; for in some instances we are leaning, in a certain degree, to our own judgment. But my thought would be that this traveling toward Canaan typifies the attempt to enter into a proper relationship with God. Israel did not enter into Canaan as quickly as they might have done. If they had had proper faith they might have entered in very soon. They might at once have gone from Mount Sinai into the land of Canaan, and had God's blessing with them. They did not go in because of unbelief. So any of us who wandered through the wilderness state before coming into the family of God did so, not because it was necessary, but because we did not exercise sufficient faith. We did not need to wait forty years, or any period of time, but could have come quickly; by consecration we could have entered in at once.

But the majority were delayed. Like the Jews they did not enter in quickly. Instead of promptly entering into the blessings they might have had through the exercise of more faith, many wandered around many years. Joshua there represented Jesus, in type. The sooner the Jews would recognize Joshua and his leadership, the sooner would he cross Jordan and enter the land of Canaan. So the sooner we recognized that the Law could accomplish nothing for us, the sooner we ourselves, under Joshua (Jesus) got into Canaan. When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, then began the wars with the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. These represent the weaknesses of our human nature that we are to battle against and overcome, that we may take possession of the whole Land of Promise, the privileges we have as the children of God.

POLITICIANS AND FALSE RELIGION

AUGUST 15.—1 KINGS 12:25-33.

THE RELATIONSHIP OF POLITICS AND RELIGION—THE REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES A GREAT MISTAKE—JEROBOAM'S POLITICAL WISDOM—GOD'S DEALINGS WITH TYPICAL ISRAEL—THE JEWISH REMNANT IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH—THE DIVINE PLAN DID NOT FAIL—SPECIAL THOUGHTS FOR THE PEOPLE TODAY.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image."—Exodus 20:4, 5.

Jeroboam was not a bad man in the sense of sympathizing with viciousness and crime, nor in the sense of wishing to bring his people into slavery. On the contrary, he was a man of courage and love of liberty, who desired to deliver his people from what he considered to be oppression in connection with the new king Rehoboam, Solomon's successor. Under his leadership, the ten tribes of Israel revolted from the House of David and established themselves as a separate kingdom, with the avowed object of being free from the oppressions of the kings.

In many respects this would seem to have been a noble procedure; but it was a great mistake, as is every move which ignores God and his arrangements. The divine arrangement for the nation was that its affairs were all to be under God's care as God's kingdom, with the family of David as God's representatives. Under these conditions the religious interests had gradually gathered more and more about the vicinity of the Temple of Jerusalem. The more religious of the people liked to be near it, especially as it was obligatory under the law that they should go up there to worship at least once or twice a year.

Whatever were the good thoughts of Jeroboam respecting the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, he quickly manifested the spirit of a politician. He reasoned that the going of the people to Jerusalem to worship yearly would mean that sooner or later they would again be drawn back to the kings of the line of David; and that in order to preserve his own power he must break off the religious connections with Jerusalem by establishing a new religious cult.

Two golden calves were prepared, the one located in the northern part of the territory, and the other towards the southern part, that thus the people might have the general thought that worship and sacrifice could be performed at one place as well as at another. Moreover, he arranged for religious festivals, at times different by about a month from the times of celebrations at Jerusalem. This was skilful political wisdom of the kind which would appeal to the majority of rulers not deeply imbued with faith in God. Alas, it seems too true that much of the religion of the masses is but a form of godliness anyway! That King Jeroboam was not very different from the people whom he ruled is manifest by the fact that they readily fell in with his plan, and that it was successful.

WERE GOD'S PLANS DEFEATED?

Many might be inclined to say that God's plans were thus defeated by an ordinary man; but the Scriptures show us that the very opposite was the case—that God's plans were forwarded by this opposition of Jeroboam. Let us see what God's plan is.

God accepted Israel as the typical people of his favor. He had made the promise to Abraham that through his posterity ultimately all the world should be blessed, which implied great exaltation to Abraham's posterity of the line of Isaac. Four hundred years elapsed before any movement was made in this direction. By that time Israel was numerous and in bondage in Egypt, and God sent word to them through Moses that if they were so minded he was ready to fulfil to them the promise made to Abraham.

They rejoiced greatly and followed Moses to Mount Sinai, where the Lord entered into a covenant with them, that if they would keep his law perfectly he would give them everlasting life and qualify them to be the seed of Abraham who would inherit the promise of qualification for blessing the world. They entered the covenant, but like all imperfect men were unable to keep the law—unworthy therefore of everlasting life, and of being the favored seed of Abraham to bless others.

Later on, when they were discouraged, God promised to send them Messiah, whose kingdom would bless them and afford them an opportunity of sharing in the promise made to Abraham. God's dealings with Israel, therefore, were of a typical character. Their Atonement Day, their law, their mediator, their sacrifices, all typified better sacrifices, etc., under a better Mediator, Christ. The entire dealing of God with Israel was with a view to raising them up out of the fallen condition to as high a standard as possible for them, that thus they might be prepared, when Messiah would come, to be associated with him in his kingdom, as his bride class. Let us see how this fits in with God's dealings in this lesson.

The deflection of Jeroboam and the majority of the nation had the effect of separating from the ten tribes, and of driving into the territory of the two tribes, the most faithful and loyal of the Israelites. To these the idolatries established by Jeroboam were properly repulsive. They were willing to forsake their earthly interests. They refused the opportunities of the politician, remained loyal to God and his institutions, and were thus at a disadvantage. This continued for years, until in God's providence the ten tribes went into captivity to Babylon, at which time more and more of the people gravitated towards the territory of Judah and Benjamin, known as the kingdom of Judah. Later on, God overthrew the kingdom of Judah and allowed these people also to go into Babylonian captivity; but they preserved in a large measure their religious sentiments and interests while in the land of Babylon.

THE RETURN FROM BABYLON

Later, when the Lord delivered the people from Babylon through the instrumentality of King Cyrus, matters had so changed that there were only a few who considered it advantageous to return to Palestine. The great mass of the ten-tribe kingdom had become thoroughly incorporated with the Gentiles, and no longer professed the religion of their fathers or had faith in the promise made to Abraham. Many of the Judean captivity similarly lost faith and became Gentiles. As a matter of fact, only about 50,000 altogether returned to Palestine; and they represented the faithful, who trusted in God and sacrificed all Babylonian advantages and privileges, coming back to a desolate land and the city of Jerusalem.

These became the nucleus of a new people, who, in the days of Jesus, were in wonderful readiness for him, as compared with the remainder of mankind. In a very few years approximately 25,000 accepted Christ, with a full consecration unto death, as his footstep followers. The remainder of the nation being then cast off from special favor, the door was opened to the Gentiles, that they might hear the Gospel message and become fellow-heirs of the same body, or company, with these 25,000 consecrated of Israel, representatives of all the tribes. If we

lacked evidence of the value of the divine dealing with the nation of Israel in preparing them to accept Messiah, we see it in the fact that so many were ready to receive him in so comparatively short a time; whereas it has required 1,800 years to gather from all the other nations of the world the remainder of the elect company, the total of which, according to the Scriptures, is 144,000.

Our lesson, thus seen, indicates no failure on God's part, but wisdom, in permitting the rebellion of Jeroboam and the ten tribes of Israel. Surely it will eventually be seen, as the Bible declares, that all of God's good purposes will be accomplished; and that the word which has gone forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases and shall prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. (Isaiah 55:10, 11) Soon the elect church and the spiritual seed of Abraham will be completed; and then God's promise to Abraham will begin to be fulfilled. (Galatians 3:8, 16, 29) All the families of the earth will be blessed by the kingdom of Christ and his church.

"WAIT UPON THE LORD"

Modern Jeroboams may be found all along the paths of history—men who, under guise of respect for religion, are really politicians, seeking their own advantage, and willing to sell the people to any religious system which would work to their benefit. Every one familiar with history must realize that religion has been made a cloak for all kinds of political intrigue, and always, as in the case of Jeroboam, under pretense of giving the people greater liberties.

The special thought for the people today is the one which would have been the safe one for the ten tribes of old; namely, to wait for the Lord to overrule their affairs and to deliver them from the bondage of kings in his own way. This is the Lord's message to us now. God's people are forewarned not to use carnal weapons, and not to trust in such weapons in the hands of others. The trust of God's people is to be in God. They are to realize his faithfulness and the truth of his promises, which assure them that all things are working together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purposes.—Romans 8:28.

To these God is now saying as in olden times, "Wait ye upon me, until the time that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." This will not be literal fire devouring the literal earth, but a symbolic fire of trouble devouring the political, financial, social and religious structure of the world, and preparing them for the great blessings of Messiah's kingdom. These are referred to in the next verse, in which the Lord declares, "Then [following the fire of trouble and national distress] I will turn to the people a pure message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."—Zephaniah 3:8, 9.

That pure message is what the Bible elsewhere speaks of as the still small voice of God, which will be heard amongst the people during the thousand years of Messiah's reign and which will effect their full deliverance from ignorance, superstition and sin back to harmony with God. And the Scriptures declare that whosoever of all mankind will not obey that voice of God through the great Messiah will be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.—Acts 3:19-23.

KING ASA'S REFORM WORK

AUGUST 22.—2 CHRONICLES 15:1-15.

KING SOLOMON'S GREAT-GRANDSON—ADVERSE INFLUENCE OF THE TEN-TRIBE KINGDOM—KING ASA'S OVERTHROW OF IDOLATRY—EGYPTIAN INVASION REPULSED—A GREAT NATIONAL REVIVAL—IDOLS OF BRONZE, WOOD, STONE, PEN AND INK—THE GOD OF THE CREEDS—NEED OF AN ASA TODAY—NEED OF ANOTHER SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT—HELP COMING THROUGH THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."—James 4:8.

Asa, king of Judah, was the great-grandson of King Solomon. The spirit of worldliness which occupied the latter part of Solomon's reign, and which led to the split-off of the ten tribes under Rehoboam his son, met with some measure of check during King Asa's reign. When the ten-tribe kingdom, called Israel, revolted and went into idolatry, the influence affected the kingdom of Judah to some extent. It became partially idolatrous. Images of Baal and groves for the practise of the licentious orgies of his worship grew in numbers in Judah, until King Asa's time. As a reformer, he set about the overthrow of all the idolatrous worship and the substitution of true religion of the God of Israel, inaugurated by Moses and the Law Covenant. We know not the influence operating upon King Asa to take a course so different from that of his father and his grandfather, but perhaps he was learning lessons from the experiences of his people.

His first endeavors to obliterate idolatry seem to have been only partially effective. He next turned his attention to the fortifying of his own country. Then came a great war with the Egyptian invader, Zerah, with an immense host, one million strong, with three hundred iron chariots. They came upon the kingdom of Judah from the south, and their numbers and reputed strength made them a terror. They sought for spoils.

Under these circumstances the Lord's message to King Asa, through Azariah the Prophet, was especially welcome. The Prophet pointed out the adversities of the ten tribes as being because they were without the true God, without the law, without the teaching priests. They had gotten into an anarchous condition, with no peace to anybody; and yet the Lord had helped them, in proportion as they at any time had turned to him. God had always shown his willingness to let those who so desired be in harmony with him, and to bless them. King Asa had manifested such a disposition; and now he had the encouraging message, "Be strong and let not your hands be weak; for your work shall be rewarded."

This message encouraged the king to put away further the idolatries and to renew the altar of the Lord's house. As a consequence, he had the support of the most godly people of his own land; and, furthermore, there came to his support many from the ten-tribe kingdom who still respected God and his promises. They were glad to get away to a place where the great God was worshiped.

God blessed King Asa and his people in their repulse of the invasion of Zerah and his hosts. The spirit of reverence for God was greatly increased. The people were in a religious mood, and a great national awakening along religious lines followed. They entered into a covenant with the Lord that all opposed to God should be put to death. "And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart and had sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the Lord gave them rest round about."

THE LESSON'S IMPORT TO US

We have a double interest in this lesson. First, it is a scrap of ancient history which reveals to us God's care over his people and his willingness to be found of them when they sought him, even though they and their forefathers had for a time been disloyal. Second, applying the lesson to our day, we see the people everywhere in idolatry—not only the heathen, who worship before idols of bronze and wood and stone, but also the more civilized, who have set up creed idols. These latter, printed with ink upon paper, describe the character of God in terms equally repulsive with the idols of the heathen. The true God is little known, the God of love, "the God of all grace, the Father of all mercies," "from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift."

Our creed idols represent God as a great monster, a demon. They picture God as sitting down before the creation of the world and deliberately planning for the creation of our race, with foreknowledge and intention that nearly all should spend eternity in horrible torture at the hands of fire-proof devils. They picture the church as the elect class, taken to heaven, to look over the battlements of heaven and witness the horrible sufferings of all the heathen and all the Jews, because they rejected Christ, and the sufferings also of nearly all of Christian lands, because they did not become saintly under the preaching of the Gospel.

These horrible idols are no longer respected by the more intelligent; but they are still recognized, bowed down to and worshiped by the masses. The true God is still proportionately rejected and unknown to the people. They are indeed told that he is a God of love, at the same time that they are told that he is roasting thousands of millions, and knew about their sufferings and premeditated the same from before the foundation of the world. All talk about his justice and his love is thus discounted in advance: and the people, bound by ignorance and superstition to these idols, which are centuries old, are suffering from their ignorance.

We need today an Asa to rise and, encouraged by the promises of God, to break in pieces the great creed idols of Christendom and to liberate the people from bondage to them.

He should have the support of all the God-fearing people, as King Asa had. In proportion as the idols and their worship would cease, the repair of the true altar of God would progress, and many would rejoice to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, in his service. (Romans 12:1, 2) Not by physical force, nor by cruelty, nor by literal axes, would these great creed idols be destroyed, but by the presentation of the Word of the living God. In proportion as the Bible comes to be rightly understood, the follies of the creeds and their unscripturalness will more and more be appreciated.

TRUE COVENANTERS, ALL OF US

The account of how the people of Judah and Benjamin, the most religious people of that time, bound themselves with an oath, or covenant, to God is very interesting. It reminds us of a similar religious movement in Scotland in which some of God's people swore allegiance to him to the best of their knowledge, and signed the covenant with their own blood.

The day has come for other covenanters to come forward and to enter into a covenant with God that they will be loyal to him and to his word, and that they will put away the creed idols. We have greater knowledge today than had the covenanters of Scotland; but Christian people need to have their spirit of full consecration, full devotion to God. We have much more knowledge than had the people of Judah, but we need to have their spirit for destroying the idols and entering into a covenant with the Lord to be faithful to him. Such a company of consecrated ones, covenanters in the highest sense, enlightened as we have the privilege of being enlightened today, would be a mighty force, a mighty power.

Many look sympathetically at such a statement, yet have not the courage of their convictions. They are timid, fearful and—shall we say it?—hypocritical. Many forget that, in joining any church, its creed is endorsed publicly; and that a private denial of it does not annul their obligations. Many forget the Master's words, "His servants ye are to whom ye render service."

Many say, "We do not believe the creeds; but they are popular, and we will support them." They do this because to take any other position would be to come into conflict with some of the wise and great and rich, who although they do not believe the creeds themselves, seem interested in maintaining them as shackles upon the masses of the people. Under these conditions we are not to expect any general reform nor to think that those faithful to the Lord will be approved before men. We are, however, to expect that when Messiah's Kingdom shall be fully established the faithful ones will be his associates in the kingdom, which will then take full control and fully overthrow the entire system of error which has bound the world of mankind with shackles of ignorance and superstition lo, these many years, and which has kept the people from God, in that they cannot love or from the heart obey the one who is represented to them as a merciless God and an all-powerful adversary.

INTERESTING LETTERS

SOUTH AFRICA CONVENTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

The Lord had been pleased to grant us much of his fellowship and blessing these latter days, and our hearts are full of gratitude accordingly. The Memorial season was a time of much refreshing to all the Lord's people in South Africa. Our hearts were deeply and joyfully moved with the thought that in all probability this celebration would be the last on this side of the veil, and that ere long we would drink of the fruit of the vine NEW with our dear Master in the Father's kingdom.

At Durban forty-seven partook of the symbols of our Lord's death and our dying with him, renewing our covenant of consecration and seeking grace to "run with patience the race set before us." Next on the list was the Zulu class at Ndwedwe, who at the Memorial numbered thirty-eight. Fifteen memorialized at Johannesburg, eight at Capetown, six at Douglas and two at Balfour. Reports are not yet to hand from Pretoria, where there is also a class, and the disturbed state of affairs beyond the Zambezi, due to the war, will I fear make reports from Central Africa impossible. All alike testify, however, to the great blessing received.

During the Easter holidays we had a glorious convention at Durban—truly "the best yet"! For four days we were on the mountain-top with the Lord and as one brother expressed it, "We would fain build tabernacles and dwell there." Excellent addresses were given by Brothers Anceketill, Möller and Stubbs, and in this feature I had the privilege to share.

Two symposiums, one on "The Three Graces" (1 Corinthians 13:13) and the other on "The Panoply of God" (Ephesians 6:14-17), discovered much latent talent among the brethren that gives promise of large service, and was a source of much edification to the convention.

The praise and testimony meetings gave opportunity for grateful praise and thanksgiving to God, a feature so much appreciated that it prolonged the program.

On Easter Sunday a baptismal service furnished opportunity for seven sisters and six brothers to symbolize their consecration, while at a dedication service two children were presented as a thank-offering to the Lord. When, on Monday evening, we came to the final meeting and farewell address, we all felt that our cup was running over; and as we sang the old, familiar strain, "God be with you till we meet again," we felt that surely we would not have a more blessed experience "Till we meet at Jesus' feet"! Loth to part, some of the brethren who had gathered from a distance tarried with us, and we had Convention-Echo and Re-echo meetings in the week that followed.

We realized that you were with us in spirit, dear Brother, and that we had your prayers. By a unanimous rising vote I was instructed to convey to you the loving greeting of the assembled brethren and the Ecclesias in Africa which they represented, and to assure you of our deep gratitude to God and to you for your faithful ministry, by which we have all so largely profited. I have the greatest pleasure in passing on this message. May our Heavenly Father give you grace for every trial, strength for every duty, much of the joy of his fellowship here below, and at last an abundant entrance into his kingdom!

We feel, dear Brother, that we have all been greatly strengthened by this time of refreshing for the last lap of the race, and that by God's assisting grace we are going to be faithful unto the end, and gain the crown of life.

The hope of the PHOTO-DRAMA coming to Africa is a great stimulus to the brethren and we are confidently expecting much blessing to accrue from it when it arrives.

With much love in the Lord to yourself and to all the brethren at the Tabernacle, I am

Your brother and colaborer,

WM. W. JOHNSTON.—Africa.

SPENT FIFTY YEARS SEARCHING FOR THE TRUE CHURCH

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

Please excuse me for taking up your precious time in reading this poorly written letter, but I feel I must write you a few lines to testify what the truth has done for me.

I am 78 years old. I spent fifty years of my life searching for the true church, but did not find what I was seeking until five years ago. My eyes were opened by reading the Russell-White Debate published in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, distributed by Sister Croul and Sister Green. After carefully reading that debate I exchanged the yoke of bondage for Christ's yoke, and since then I have been learning of him. I find his yoke easy, his burden light, as I strive to follow faithfully in his footsteps.

Then I read, studied, re-read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES until I proved beyond a doubt that they are the true Keys to the Bible, unlocking the doors of our Heavenly Father's inexhaustible source of love and mercy which he has in store for the dead and dying race. These precious truths have been the "pearl of great price" to me, for they have led me out of darkness into light; out of fear and doubt into faith, and hope; out of error into truth; out of sorrow and despair into the oil of gladness. They have taken my weary feet from the sandy foundations of the creeds of men and the "doctrines of devils" and placed them on the Rock of Ages—that Mighty Rock whose towering form reaches above the coming storm; and from the springs that from it burst we now can drink and quench our thirst.

Your weekly sermons and THE WATCH TOWER are beacon lights that guide and comfort me on my way when the shadows are deep and the waiting-time seems so long. The Bible is my daily bread, and since I have consecrated my all to the Lord its sacred pages are illumined, and I can read it with an understanding mind and my whole being is filled with that peace and joy which is unspeakable and full of glory—which the world cannot give, and, praise the Lord, neither can it take away!

My lessons in the school of Christ have mostly been learned through the printed page; but I am so thankful that I have

the privilege of feasting at the Lord's table in any way that he provides. And I always have a prayer and a blessing in my heart for you, that faithful Servant, who, despite the opposition of all the agents of the adversary, is still spreading this feast for the hungry, thirsty truth-seekers to feast upon; and may the Lord still guide and bless you in this harvest work until the race is run and the victory won, is the prayer of your isolated sister in the truth, love and fellowship of our Lord and Master, and all of his consecrated children.

MRS. LOVINA PHILLIPS.—Ind.

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"THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS"

"Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness."—2 Peter 3:11.

Many in the past have misunderstood St. Peter's prophecy concerning the destruction of the present heavens and earth. They have inferred that he meant the burning up of the literal earth and heavens in a great conflagration. This thought seems to be embodied in all the creeds, Protestant and Catholic. Apparently there has been a serious mistake here. The Apostle is using these words in a figurative sense, just as we might say that a man would move heaven and earth to accomplish his designs. Throughout the prophecies of the Bible the heavens mean the ecclesiastical powers and the earth means organized society, including the financial and the political powers.

The things of the present order are soon to pass away—its banking institutions, its great monetary affairs, its stocks and bonds, its polities, its great religious systems, indeed, the entire social fabric. The whole arrangement is now about to be melted down. An entirely new order is about to come in. This melting down will begin in the overthrow of the religious institutions. To the whole world it will be an unexpected and overwhelming catastrophe; but to the true church, watching as the Lord bade them to do, it will not be a surprise; for these are "children of the light," and this day of the Lord shall not overtake them as a thief.

The Lord's faithful, watching people, guided by the Word of Truth, will have an understanding of temporal affairs. As St. Paul has assured us, though this day shall come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, it shall not so come upon God's children who are living up to their privileges. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh;" "When ye see these things, . . . know that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21:28, 31) The Master does not say, When ye see all these things, but When ye see the beginning of them, then we are to lift up our heads and rejoice—not rejoicing in the trouble, nor in the sufferings of others, but in the fact that these things are the foretold signs that the present order is about to be succeeded by a new order, which will be far better, and more advantageous and desirable for all.

The church herself will be the "new heaven," and will come into great glory, power and privilege. The thought in the early church, evidently, was that these dispensational changes would very shortly come to pass. They were living in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord, the establishment of his kingdom and the glorification of the church. Some of them even felt too confident of the matter. The Apostle Paul writes to the church of Thessalonica saying that some of them had made a mistake in thinking that the day of the Lord might have already come. He tells them that that day could not come until the Man of Sin should be revealed. Thus in the days of the Apostles the church was ever on the qui vive; and throughout this entire age the Lord's people have been left in uncertainty as to the time of the Master's second coming, watching, preparing, for the things of the kingdom, knowing that the day of Christ would come as a "thief in the night" at the appointed time.—2 Thessalonians 5:3.

WHAT THE WATCHERS NOW SEE

Now we who are living in this day see the beginning of these foretold events. We see the prelude to the great Battle of Armageddon. Our thought is that the Armageddon itself will be the mighty "Earthquake" spoken of in Revelation. (Revelation 16:16-18) In this great revolution and in the succeeding anarchy all earthly institutions will be swept away. The result of the anger, hatred and strife, if permitted to continue indefinitely, would be so terrible that it would bring about the destruction of the race; but for the elect's sake, that they may begin their glorious reign, God will cut short the carnage, and will set up his own kingdom under Christ and his elect church. Christ and his bride will take over the kingdoms of this world, and thus will hinder the strife of men from going to the extreme that it would otherwise go. But it will not be stopped until the present order shall have been wholly dissolved.

A vivid description of this awful time of trouble is given by the prophets. For the benefit of our new readers, we give a few citations of such prophecies, which repay investigation. (Isaiah 24: 17-22; 28:21, 22; 33:7-14; 34:1-8; Psalm 18:7-19) See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol 4, pp. 15-20. Along this same line, read also Isaiah 13:1-13; Jeremiah 25:8-38; Revelation 18; 16:12-21. We believe that the present strife in Europe is very forcefully depicted in some of the prophecies cited above, and that this is only the beginning of the great trouble and overthrow, the breaking in pieces of the nations as a potter's vessel. In our own land we see the portents of the coming trouble, in strikes, labor riots, I. W. W. demonstrations, etc. The Scriptures cited above declare in unmistakable language that the whole present order will go up in a mighty conflagration. The troubles not long since in the Colorado mines, the more recent strikes in London, Chicago, Bridgeport and Bayonne, are only premonitory rumblings which, with many other disturbances of like nature, presage the coming storm.

Selfishness is the great motive power of the world—if this thing is done or that thing is accomplished, something very advantageous to themselves will result. Because people want their own names to be great, they strain every nerve to accomplish that result. They do this also in political lines—trying to "feather their nests" for the future. In Europe they do the same along monarchial lines. Various houses in power seek to have and to hold the honor of the people. The whole world are setting their hearts and minds on the things which will bring no real satisfaction in the end, and not upon the things of the Lord.

The Apostle points out that all these things that occupy men's minds and absorb their energies are to pass away. None of them are to be permanent. We realize this to be so. We see that their passing away is just at hand in this our day. Others do not perceive it, although many thoughtful minds see that present conditions are unprecedented, that some great change must be impending; and their hearts are failing them for fear.

Surely the knowledge of these things, of the transitoriness, the trifling value of the most alluring of earth's gifts, should cause us to turn from them and to set our affections and hopes upon the heavenly things, which are infinite in value and which shall never pass away. We should lay up treasure in heaven, where the institutions will be permanent, and where armies and revolutions will not destroy the government. All those who believe in the great change just before us should be living for the future and not for the present. The more we discern, then, the teachings of the Bible, the more we imbibe its spirit, the more shall we live for and prepare for the great blessings promised for the future to those who love God. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," is the injunction of our Father in heaven.

HOLY ATMOSPHERE, NOT MIASMA, FOR NEW CREATURES

These directions are not to the world, and they are not to the flesh of the children of God, but are for us as new creatures in Christ. The old creature being imperfect has no standing with God; but there is nothing unholy in the new creature, and the imperfections of his flesh being covered by the Robe of Christ's righteousness he has a standing with God. The difficulty which the new creature encounters is the weakness of the flesh in which he must tabernacle for the present, and the danger of being misled, enticed away, from the things that are holy. Day by day he seeks to control the flesh and to bring it wholly into subjection.

The new creature begotten from above, wishes to be holy and to keep his tabernacle holy. He breathes by nature a holy atmosphere; anything contrary is poisonous to this heavenly germ which must be fostered and nourished with the greatest care. That it may properly develop it is necessary that it be fed upon "the finest of the wheat;" it is necessary

too, that the very thoughts of the brain and the meditations of the heart should be conformed as nearly as possible to God's perfect standard for these new creatures. To this end rich supply is furnished by the Heavenly Father, who begat us to this new nature.

The child of God who is slovenly or careless in the management of his earthly body is not living in accord with true holiness, is not properly developing this heavenly "seed" begotten within him. These new creatures, so far as possible, should fellowship with one another. They are to seek to build one another up in the most holy faith. They are to remember that they are not to pull each other down, but are to endeavor to assist each other as far as they may be able. Whoever thinks to himself, "Sometime the kingdom is coming, sometime the time of trouble will overtake the present order of things; but meantime we will enjoy the things of this world," will not be living up to his privileges, and will be very likely to be taken unawares as by "a thief in the night;" for he is not living in proper relationship with the Lord, and he will be likely to find when too late that he has lost the "prize."

"Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!"

"My Father! my Father! this heart would be thine!
Oh, keep it from wanderings!
Oh, visit and nourish thy wilderness vine,
Though it be from the bitter springs!
Till the time of my trial and pruning is o'er,
And thy child is safe on eternity's shore!"

IS MY HEART "GOOD GROUND"?

"That on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."—Luke 8:15.

We recognize these words as a portion of our Lord's parable of The Sower. A man went out to sow his field. As he scattered his seed, some fell on one kind of soil and some on another—some on thorny ground, some on stony ground, some on the hard, beaten pathway, and some on good ground. The good ground brought forth—some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some one hundred-fold.

According to the Master's interpretation of this parable, the good seed represents the message of the kingdom, which as it falls here and there appeals to some hearts differently from what it does to others. That seed falling upon the beaten pathway represented the message as heard by persons into whose hearts it did not enter at all. They simply heard with the outer ear and forgot. It made no impression. The Lord said that the reason for this was that the adversary came and caught the seed away. It had not penetrated even the surface of the hard ground. The conditions were not favorable for its entrance into the heart and the hearers soon forgot all that they had heard. The wiles of the adversary would always, if possible, prevent the seed from entering the heart and taking root.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A SHALLOW HEART

Amongst those who do receive the truth are the stony-ground class. These are at first very much enthused, but they lack depth of character. They are not the kind the Lord is now seeking. They will not bring forth the fruitage, for they have not sufficient depth for rooting. They are shallow. They desire to trim their sails in harmony with the favorable winds of this life. As soon as they find out that the truth is not popular, they forsee persecution or social ostracism; then their ardor cools and their interest in the harvest message wanes and gradually dies out. Thus they are like wheat planted in shallow soil, which comes up and flourishes a little while; but when the hot sun comes out it withers away, not having much root.

The heart that is like the thorny ground is favorable as to soil. It is good ground, with fine prospects for developing the fruits of the holy Spirit. But it is infested with thorns, which are not removed, but are permitted to remain and so choke the wheat. These thorns are not the frivolous pleasures of life—theaters, cards, dancing, etc.; but, as the Lord explains in the parable, they are the cares of life, the ambitions of life, the deceitfulness of riches—perhaps the feeling that if they can accumulate wealth they can serve the Lord's cause the better. This tendency to go out after other things allows a condition to obtain that is unfavorable to the wheat class. These may be good business men, fine politicians, or they may be immersed in some kind of study. Others of them may be fine housekeepers and have a pride as to how well things are kept, or they may be leaders in society or in works of reform, etc. All these are the thorns of the parable. A heart of this kind does not bring forth fruit, because the ground, while good, is otherwise occupied, and the message of the kingdom and its work are crowded out to a large degree, so that no fruit is brought to perfection.

Then we come to the "good ground" class of this parable, ground where the soil is not only good, but cleared of all noxious weeds which would prevent the proper growth of the wheat seed. This condition represents entire consecration to God. Everything which would hinder has been cast out. The cares of this life are not permitted to enter this heart and choke the Word. Such a one has made a bona-fide contract with the Lord and knows when he is keeping it; and he will keep it. He has the proper quality or depth of character and more or less of ability. And there is the special trait of thorough honesty, loyalty.

Amongst those of the class who are styled the "good ground," we find different conditions in life—not many noble, but some noble; not many great, but some great; not many learned, but some learned; not many wise, but some wise. But they must all be good of heart, and they must be honest, else they could not bring forth the necessary fruitage—honesty being the most important feature of all, with a degree of intelligence and appreciation of the truth. We see, then, how this class might bring forth varying amounts of fruitage, according to circumstances, conditions and ability. But they are in the right heart condition to bring forth their very best—some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold and some a hundred-fold.

In the picture we see that the truth is represented by the seed, and we see that the individuals are also represented by the seed. The thought is that a grain of Truth is planted, and that in an honest heart it produces a character which is in harmony with the truth. That seed of truth is the message of the kingdom, the Word of the kingdom—not a truth about the philosophies of men or some scientific truth, but a particular truth—not something that ignores God's plan and purports to be a better plan than that which God has arranged, but the one particular thing—the Word of the kingdom.

FOUR HUNDRED MILLION TARES

It seems remarkable that with so many that are called Christian people—numbering now four hundred millions—they know so little about the kingdom! The vast majority have learned but very little of it, if anything. This is manifest when we look over in Europe and see millions fighting to the death, when we realize that other millions are ready to fight here in the United States also. This is because they have not become new creatures. As the natural seed enters the ground, sprouts and brings forth something that is fostered and developed by the soil, so the good seed of the truth in the proper heart brings forth good fruit. The message of the kingdom brings forth results in harmony with its nature. It reaches the proper class and brings them to an attitude where God accepts them as new creatures. These new creatures are the children of the kingdom; and these children of the kingdom are the wheat that will be garnered. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom."

Our Lord in another parable shows us a different kind of seed—tare seed. This tare-seed looks a little like wheat. It is not the true seed—not the seed of the kingdom. It may be a seed, or message, of morality or purity of life or total abstinence from intoxicating liquors, etc. No matter; it will not produce the kingdom class. The only seed which will produce this class is the good seed, the true kingdom message.

As we look about in the world we see that the great enemy oversowed this wheat-field of the kingdom with false seed, the darnel, the tare-seed, as represented by these various messages that have gone forth throughout the world. This seed does not necessarily bring forth bad people. They are people who are workers for various things, some of them more or less good, but they are not children of the kingdom. At the present time these tares are, many of them, influential. And the whole four hundred millions of them represent, not the true wheat-field, but merely an imitation, usurping the place really belonging to the true wheat class.

In this harvest time, now about ended, a separation has been taking place between the true wheat and the tares. The true wheat are being gathered into the garner, while the tares

are being bound in bundles to be burned—not literally burned, but destroyed as tares, as imitation wheat. They will soon cease to call themselves Christians. They will recognize themselves as what they have always been—parts of the world. Many of these are church members, but are purely of the world and its spirit. They discount the true wheat, and consider them a little queer, fanatics.

Many of these tares do not know what they are. But those who have received the message of the kingdom into good and honest hearts will bring forth fruitage in harmony therewith. It requires time to develop the right fruit. This class grow daily in knowledge, in love, and are building one another up in the most holy faith. They also do good unto all as they have opportunity. This is the whole work which God is expecting of them. These are the ones who will ere long be gathered into the heavenly kingdom beyond the veil.

After the fire of this "Day of Wrath" shall have burned up this "present evil world," and burned out all the roots of pride, then will come the great time of blessing for the world of mankind. The great plowshare of trouble will prepare humanity for the great seed-sowing of the near future. It will take a thousand years to bring forth the glorious crop of the Millennium. Those gathered then will not be wheat, but the restitution class; wheat being used in the parables of our Lord to represent the spiritual class, the saints of the Gospel age.

OUR CLEANSING—INWARD AND OUTWARD

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."—2 Corinthians 7:1.

Again we call attention to the fact that the Bible was not addressed to the world, but to the church; not to unbelievers, but to believers; not to sinners, but to those who have already turned away from sin. Many overlook this fact, and the result is a confusion of their minds.

But some may, perhaps, be inclined to say that the words of our text are applicable to sinners as well as saints—sinners especially—even though the Epistle itself is addressed "unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints, who are in the whole of Achaia." We answer, No! our text cannot appropriately be applied to sinners in general, who have not yet come to God, who have not yet repented of their sins and been forgiven. God makes no appeals to such; he merely denounces them as sinners and refuses them all recognition, all fellowship, and tells them that there is no other name given under heaven amongst men whereby they can be saved from their sins than that of Jesus—through faith in his blood. In other words, God refuses to have any dealings whatsoever with those who cannot or will not accept of the great sin-offering which he has provided. As Jesus expressed the matter, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John 14:6.

The reasonableness of the divine position is evident upon reflection. God in the present age is gathering out of the world a little flock, whose peculiar trait of character is faith in him and a desire to please him. In the age to come, the Millennial age, God purposes to deal with the remainder of mankind, and then all his requirements will be made so plain that the wayfaring man, though a simpleton, shall not err therein. (Isaiah 35:8) The Sun of Righteousness shall shine forth in that glorious Millennial day, and clearly manifest right from wrong, and show forth the divine character and attributes, so that every creature may see—yea, all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears be unstopped, as is clearly stated by the Prophet.—Isaiah 35:5.

But now, in the present age, there is a test of faith for this special little flock whom the Lord is selecting and whom he designates as his church. Any who cannot exercise the faith cannot be of this elect church but must wait for their blessing at the hands of the church during the reign of Christ, for which we still pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

SAINTS NOT NATURALLY ALL NOBLE

Not only has God made faith a necessary element of acceptance in the present time, but additionally, love of righteousness is made a part of the test. It is not enough that we should have the eye of faith which would recognize Christ's death as the redemption-price for the sins of the world, we must additionally have hearts that love righteousness in order to come under divine favor. The heart that loves righteousness discerns the weakness of its own flesh, its downward tendencies. The moment that heart recognizes Jesus as the Redeemer it flees to him, not only to be covered with his merit as respects the sins that are past, but also to have the imputed covering of his righteousness as respects the unwilling blemishes and imperfections of the present and the future—imperfections that are contrary to the will and are the result of weaknesses inherited.

This class, not in harmony with the sin of the world, nor with their own weaknesses, is referred to by our Lord in his message, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden [under the yoke of sin and appreciating its penalty, death], and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." These learners—disciples, pupils in the school of Christ—are the class to whom the words of our text are addressed. It would be useless to exhort the world in general to cleanse themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The world is in sympathy with this very filthiness and has no desire to cleanse itself, has no just appreciation of how filthy it is in the sight of God and those who have his Spirit of holiness. The Lord describes the condition of the world as one in which anger, malice, envy and various lusts [desires] are the usual and normal conditions by turns. Lust, selfishness—which often amounts to brutality in its seeking of wealth, or pleasure or power—seeks to fill the natural mind, so that if it were taken away, with nothing substituted, life would lose all of its charms. Where would be the propriety in exhorting such to put away filthiness of the flesh and spirit when they have nothing as a substitute?

Some may, perhaps, urge that there are as many noble-minded people not believers as are found amongst believers. We answer, Yes! the Scriptures agree to this, assuring us that amongst believers are not many great or wise or noble according to the course of this world. The message of God's grace often lays hold upon the lower, meaner and more degraded members of the human family rather than upon the noble, who feel less keenly their own depravity and less necessity for the Savior and his assistance. If, then, amongst the world are to be found some who are noble-minded, and if believers are generally of a lower stratum, how comes it that God has a more particular interest in these than in unbelievers? By what kind of rule does the Lord accept as children some who naturally are less noble and reject some who naturally are more noble?

We answer that the rule or standard of divine acceptance is faith and obedience of heart. Those who with their hearts, their minds, their wills, turn away from sin and by faith accept the divine arrangement, the Lord is pleased to accept according to their wills, their intentions, and not according to their flesh and its blemishes. Their unwilling defects according to the flesh are veiled from his sight by the robe of Christ's righteousness covering them, to the extent of the inability of their new minds, which despise sin and seek to war a good warfare against it in their flesh and everywhere. Such is the class addressed by the Apostle in our text, saying, "Dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

GOD'S BELOVED DISESTEEMED

As the mouthpiece of the Lord the Apostle addresses all believers who have fled away from the sin and who are striving to be pleasing and acceptable to God, as "dearly beloved." The Apostle, a noble-minded man himself, appreciated the fact that many of these dearly beloved brethren had weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh. He did not love them on account of these blemishes, but in spite of them—because at heart they were loyal to the principles of righteousness and striving to overcome sin and its inclinations in their own mortal flesh, and—so far as their influence would go—in the world. But the world does not love these whom the Father loves, whom Jesus loves, whom the Apostle loves. Our Master's words are, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and have ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, that your fruit should be permanent."—John 15:16, 18, 19.

The world does not like these chosen ones because, confessing their own weaknesses and striving against them, they call them by their proper names—sins, meannesses, filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Every effort made by these to cleanse themselves is a reproof to others who are not striving to cleanse themselves, and who hate to be reminded that the

things in which they take their greatest pleasure are greed, selfishness, inordinate affections, strifes, pride, vainglory. Whoever is fully satisfactory to the world may be sure that he is not satisfactory to the Lord. Whoever is satisfactory to the Lord need not expect to be satisfactory to the world; for the fellowship of this world is enmity to God, and, therefore, the world is not subject to the divine standard, neither indeed can be, as the Apostle explains. (James 4:4; Romans 8:7) Its heart is in the other direction.

The law of the new creation—love for God with all our hearts and for our neighbor as ourselves—is to the world unreasonable, unthinkable, undesirable every way, and every reminder of it, even by the presence of those who at heart are on the side of righteousness, causes displeasure and discomfort. To these the Lord and his footstep followers have always been unwelcome—intruders. They prefer to be let alone, to have no suggestion offered to the effect that they are wrong. True, some of them have a pleasurable pride in generosity, a love of a good name, and a reputation for honesty and virtue. But they wish to be considered as standards and exemplars, and resent any intrusion, any measurements of their thoughts, words or deeds by the divine standards. Therefore those who continually recognize and honor the divine standards are disesteemed by them.

THE NECESSITY FOR CLEANSING

But why should the Apostle suggest that the church should do a cleansing work in their hearts and in their flesh when we find that God has wholly covered these blemishes from his sight? If the blemishes are covered, why trouble about them further? Ah, there are the best of reasons! Those who at heart are loyal to the Lord and his righteousness are distressed by their blemishes, their sins, the weaknesses of their flesh, even though they are aware that the Lord has graciously covered all these, and is not imputing their guilt because at heart they are opposed to them. The desire of this class is to build, to establish, character by faithfulness to principles of righteousness. They wish that their minds may become more and more established in faithfulness to the Lord and his Golden Rule of love; and that, so far as possible, the new mind shall control the fallen, imperfect flesh and bring it into subjection, into accord, with the divine law of love.

Whoever, after having experienced the Lord's blessing in the forgiveness of sins, has no desire to war a warfare against them, and to bring into subjection to his new mind the powers and talents of his mortal body, has not the true spirit of sonship. He would thereby be giving evidence that he does not truly love righteousness and that he does not truly hate iniquity. He would thus be testifying that he is not of the class whom the Lord desires as his sons on the spirit plane—as members of the little flock, the bride, the Lamb's wife.

We see, then, good reason why the brethren should be appealed to by the Apostle in our text. We see a good reason why all begotten by the same Spirit of holiness should give heed to his words and make the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit the principal work of the remainder of life. We see that unless they do this, they will belie their pretensions of love for righteousness and hatred of iniquity. We see that by such a warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh and of the spirit, the Lord designs that they should establish a crystallized character. Thus as the Scriptures express it, they shall be "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light"—fit in heart for the divine service. Such as are then fit in heart for the service of the Millennial kingdom will, we are assured, be granted new bodies, free from all blemishes, in the first resurrection. Thus, having perfected their minds and established character in their hearts in the present life by controlling the flesh so far as possible, they demonstrate that at heart they have the character-likeness of their Lord and Redeemer. Only those who do thus develop into copies of God's dear Son will constitute the very elect, the kingdom class, the seed of Abraham, through whom the world will shortly receive its blessing.

"LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES"

The words, "Let us cleanse ourselves," do not have reference to our getting rid of Adamic condemnation. Such cleansing from original sin is impossible on our part, as the Apostle elsewhere explains. We cannot have it unless we receive it as a free gift from God. In what sense, then, do we cleanse ourselves? We answer that having been reckonedly cleansed by the Lord, and brought under the influence of his holy Spirit and the enlightening understanding of his Word, we are now invited to show our zeal for righteousness and to co-operate with him in the work. While all the condemnation is reckoned as having passed from us, we still have the opportunity of showing the Lord what our spirit, our intention, would be, by striving against sin in our minds and in our flesh. The incentive to this cleansing is of the Lord, but the cleansing itself is something for us to do—"Let us cleanse ourselves." The cleansing work is a tedious one; for at first we did not discern how deeply defiled we were, how nearly all the suggestions of the mind were selfish. We did not even recognize selfishness as being sin.

As the eyes of our understanding opened more and more widely we got proper views of the Lord and his righteousness, our own conditions, the need of his covering robe, etc. Day by day, as we have since striven to put away sin, selfishness—yea, every element of ungodliness and unloveliness—we have become more painfully conscious of how deep was the stain which we at first, perhaps, thought was merely superficial. Many of the Lord's people, after years of labor in seeking to cleanse themselves from the filth of the flesh and of the spirit, now, alas, see more of their own blemishes than they discerned at first, even though they have gotten rid of much of this natural filthiness, selfishness, etc. This would make the work of cleansing a very discouraging one if it were not for the assurance of the Lord's Word that he regards us, not according to the flesh, but according to our intentions, our desires, our endeavors. He reckons us as overcomers because of our good warfare against the natural blemishes, whatever may be the measure of our success.

The distinction which the Apostle draws between the filthiness of the flesh and that of the spirit should be noticed. After we have accepted the Lord, we take our stand with him as the Captain of our Salvation, to be soldiers of the Cross and to fight a good fight against sin and all the works of the flesh and of the devil. Soon we find ourselves in company with others of the same class, and naturally and properly begin to cleanse the flesh, to put away evil practises, outward wrongdoing of every kind. This is well. What fellowship could there be between children of the light and any works of darkness? Before long, in the case of many, a considerable outward change is manifested—careless language is avoided, passions are restrained, selfishness is curbed, at least in its outward manifestations. Neighbors and friends may see a considerable change. This is good, but not sufficient. We must also cleanse our spirits, our minds. It is not sufficient that we avoid outward wrongdoing. Our minds must be cleansed. We must learn to hate sin, to repel its first advances. We must learn that our minds and our bodies are the temples of the Lord and that everything contrary to him and his law of righteousness and love must be barred.

Others are witnesses to some extent of our trials and triumphs of an outward kind. But the most important battles of the new creation are those which are known only to ourselves and to our Captain—the battle of the new mind or will against the influences of the old, natural disposition. The true soldier of the cross will find this battle-ground quite sufficient to engage all of his combativeness and destructiveness and to keep him fully occupied. Such as are on the alert to develop the new character have much less time than others to criticize their neighbors, friends and brethren. They find enough in themselves requiring vigilance and restraint. And as they progress in this direction, they become more sympathetic toward others who have the same or other weaknesses and inclinations contrary to the divine standards. They sympathize especially with the brethren of the new creation, who similarly have given their all to the Lord and are battling against the world, the flesh and the adversary, in their bodies and in their spirits.

OUR GRADUAL TRANSFORMATION

Those who have already come into relationship to the Father as children should remember that God's promises are that we shall be more and more received into his fellowship, have more and more of his blessing, in proportion as we are loyal to these principles with which we started out. If we have turned away from the world and from sin, and find that we have certain contaminations of the flesh, we should put all these away—even the taints of sin we should seek to put away. The more we energize ourselves in this direction, the more of God's favor shall we have, the more shall we be pleasing and acceptable to him.

The Apostle in pointing out that there is filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, does not mean that the new creature is filthy. The new creature, as we are elsewhere told, is undefiled. The new creature is holy. The word spirit is frequently used to represent mind. The will must be thoroughly changed before one can become a new creature at all. And for the will ever to draw back would mean a drawing back unto perdition. To have a will for sin would mean that we had lost the holy Spirit; that we are in the second death.

But the Lord's children have this new will, this new

treasure, in an earthen vessel. We have a natural disposition toward sin. Additionally, we have minds that, even though they are putting away the things of sin, have more or less recollection of the things of sin, the impurities of sin. So while we draw ourselves away from that which is sinful, we are to strive also to have our minds pure. We are to cast out everything in us that is sympathetic with sin. We are not to think of those things, we are not to permit ourselves to ruminate on what is sinful. We are to set our affection on things above.—Colossians 3:2.

As we fill our minds with God's promises, the whole character, the whole life, becomes more transformed. The Apostle says, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds." Our minds which were in accord with the earthly things, the earthly nature, are not only to be lifted from obedience to sin, but are to be turned in a new direction. Our minds are to be filled with holy thoughts—thoughts of the Lord and his service. When the mind is in a right attitude toward God, it is comparatively easy to serve the law of God. The Apostle exhorts us to perfect holiness. We had the holiness started in us when we became the Lord's people. We gave ourselves wholly to him—He never accepts a part. Our consecration is to do God's will wholly. We present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. We started out saints; and the Lord recognizes none others than saints. Therefore we are to seek to live up to the divine standard in all the conduct of life—our words, deeds, thoughts.

OUR CLEANSING AND THE LORD'S CLEANSING

But this perfecting of holiness goes on, this cleansing of ourselves, noticing to see where there is anything in us that is impure, and putting all that away from our conduct—and, more than that, putting it away from our minds. As we do this, holiness spreads through all the avenues of life. And so a Christian ought to have a very beautiful character. If any Christian has not a beautiful character, it shows that he has not been properly attending to the matter of his cleansing, daily giving attention to his purification in his outward relationship to mankind, and inwardly in his relationship toward God.

We are to do all this in the fear of the Lord, the reverence of the Lord. There is a difference between the fear that is reverential and the fear that is slavish. The reverential fear is a profitable fear. We are not to fear our Heavenly Father as if he were a devil, who would turn on us and treat us with cruelty; but we are to have a godly fear, which will delight to do those things pleasing and acceptable in his sight. So all this cleansing of ourselves, all this perfecting of ourselves in holiness, is with a view to being perfected in the fear of the Lord. Having begotten us of his holy Spirit, having given us these precious promises, God will expect us not to put our talents into a napkin and make no progress, but to bring forth fruit—some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold. And as we do this, we shall be rewarded in proportion.

There is another Scripture which speaks of the Lord as doing this cleansing work. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." (Psalm 19:12-14) These words of the Prophet David are the sentiment of all the Lord's true people. By these words the Prophet showed his recognition of the fact that he was not capable of cleansing himself. He recognized that he might have secret faults that he did not appreciate himself—that he did not see himself. Perhaps he did not see some faults that others would see. He desired God to cleanse him from these. This indicated that he desired to get away from everything that was not in harmony with God.

This would be the proper sentiment for all Christians. We should pray to the Lord that he would show us whatever in our lives is not fully pleasing and acceptable to him, that he would help us to see ourselves as others see us, and especially to see ourselves as he sees us. We believe that many of the Lord's people have been shown their imperfections and weaknesses (in the Lord's providence) by a very severe jolt. We ask the Lord also, as did the Psalmist, to keep us back from presumptuous sins, to cleanse us wholly from these.

"THE PERFECTING OF HOLINESS"

Our text declares that such a purification of flesh and spirit, body and mind, constitutes a perfecting of holiness. The thought here is that holiness cannot be attained in a moment, but that it must be gradually effected, perfected. A right view of this matter will hinder us from falling into certain dangerous errors. Holiness is not a charm which we may put in our pockets; it is not a garment which may be worn occasionally. Holiness resembles more the tempering of a piece of metal; it enters into the entire fiber, changing its general characteristics; it is transforming in its influence. True, there is a holiness reckoned to the Lord's people in the robe of Christ's righteousness, which is granted to us when first we turn from sin, accept the Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves to God. But this is not sufficient. We must work into our characters that which we have willed—or, as the Apostle expresses it, we must allow the Lord to work in us the holy will, and the holy conduct which must necessarily accompany the holy will, as opportunity and conditions will permit.

But how is this holiness perfected in us? How does God work in us to will and then to do his good pleasure? Our text answers this portion of the question, too, assuring us that it is God's part to give us the promises; and that these promises constitute the incentives to those who are in the right attitude of mind. Without these divine promises of the present and the future blessings, who would battle against his own weaknesses? Who would strenuously resist the attacks of the world and of the adversary? Moreover, who would willingly sacrifice his life and all his natural rights to serve the Lord and his cause, if there were no exceeding great and precious promises to quicken and energize him to the service of the King, in battling against sin, in assisting all who are on the side of righteousness? Surely there would be few, if any at all. And so our text intimates, saying, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves," etc. The promises are indeed the power of God unto our cleansing—our salvation—as pointed out by St. Paul.—Romans 1:16.

"GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES"

Looking into the context to see to what promises the Apostle refers, we find in the preceding verses the declaration, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6:17, 18) What a promise! What a suggestion!—that we, by nature defiled and imperfect, should not only have the notice of our sovereign Creator, but should be invited to become his children and be given the assurance of his parental affection for us—that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence him." How wonderful it seems! And then, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, this is not the end of the matter, but merely the beginning, for he says, "If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:17.

Yes, it is this thought of what is implied in the term children of God, sons of God. The blessings and riches of the Father are to be extended through our Lord Jesus, especially to the little flock, which is now being selected from amongst men to be his bride and associates in the kingdom. These are not accepted into the kingdom at once, but as it were on probation; as the Apostle says, "Now are we the sons of God; but it doth not yet appear what we shall be"—if we are faithful. As sons of God in the present life we have the joy of knowing of our Father's character through his Word, which we are permitted to understand, but which the world does not understand. We are assured of divine supervision; so that not the slightest thing can happen to these sons except as their Father sees would be to their advantage. But they must show their love, their devotion, their oneness of spirit with the Father and the Redeemer ere they can be counted in as his bride in the full, absolute and complete sense, and be granted a share in his glories.

It is to demonstrate their possession of these graces that these consecrated ones are left for a time in the midst of evil and unfavorable surroundings—to prove their love of righteousness, their opposition to iniquity, their love to God and their faithfulness to him, their love to all who are in sympathy with the divine arrangement. If they stand these tests fully, it will mean that they will endure considerable opposition from the world, the flesh and the adversary; and that they will be correspondingly strengthened by these experiences. It is this class to whom the Apostle refers saying, "If so be that we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him." We are to suffer as he did for right doing, and because our neighbors and friends are blind as to what is the right, the proper course. We are to suffer gladly and joyfully whatever cup the Father may pour for us, knowing that he is too good to be unkind, too wise to err.

"Let us then, dearly beloved, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." As the Apostle Peter declares, "If we do these things, we shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:10, 11.

FAITHFULNESS IN LITTLE THINGS

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."—Luke 16:10.

We have in our text the statement of a great principle, one which could almost universally be acknowledged. Life's experiences have taught us that whoever can be trusted in little things can be trusted also in great matters. A man who is cautious in respects to small affairs is cautious also in important undertakings. One who is gentle in the little acts of every day life will be gentle on great occasions.

Our Lord applies this principle to his followers in a general way; and we believe it to be one of the most important lessons which the Christian can learn. There are many who are exceedingly careful about handling a large sum of money, but who are very careless in handling a small amount. There are those who are scrupulously exact as to large sums committed to their care, but who think nothing about the trifling amounts. But whoever cultivates a habit of carelessness about small things will be likely to become careless about large matters. On the other hand, whoever is careful of every dollar, every dime, who is careful to pay promptly every small debt, will be still more careful in respect to large amounts, large debts.

So it would appear to be a general principle in life that those who are careless in small things and careful in large matters will in due time or under great stress prove unreliable and unfaithful in everything, if such faithfulness should conflict with their own selfish interests. In other words, the trifles of life have an important bearing upon our character-building. Whoever learns to be conscientious about everything is being properly exercised by the lessons of life. We see this in our own individual experiences. Some are quite careless in regard to the rights of others; for instance, they would take without permission an umbrella belonging to another saying, "I want it only for an hour or so, and I will bring it back." Such a person is not properly conscientious about small things. One who would take an umbrella for even an hour has not sufficient principle to be trusted in larger things. Others will borrow articles, and forget or neglect to return them promptly, thus putting the owner to great inconvenience and annoyance. At best the habit of borrowing is deplorable.

The Scriptures tell us that our Lord is selecting a company to be with him as under priests, under judges, under kings, to have control of the affairs of earth during the thousand years of his reign; and that whoever is chosen for this work must have special fitness, special character. Those who fully yield themselves to him will be prepared for this important position; those who do not so yield themselves will not be prepared. Therefore our Lord gives us to understand that present opportunities are to be prized as opportunities for indicating what is our real attitude of heart. He makes it a condition that we cannot be his disciples unless we make a full surrender of ourselves to him as our great instructor, to be guided in all of our affairs in harmony with his will.

The Master tells us that no matter how small the affairs of life, we are to understand that the Father knows what are our needs; and that just as surely as he provides for the sparrows and the lilies of the field, so surely will he provide for those who are his children. Our Lord says to us, "Are ye not of more value than many sparrows?" Even while we were slaves of sin, the Father made provision for our return to his favor and to everlasting life, on condition that we obey him and respond to his clearly specified terms. How much more will he care for us now that we have become his children?

HUMILITY ESSENTIAL TO SERVICE

Even in the smallest affairs of life we are to look for the Lord's will. The right attitude for us to maintain is this: I serve the Lord Christ; and whether it is a great work or a small one does not matter. "Therefore whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31) The humblest kind of service is acceptable to the Lord if prompted by love. We recall the case of our Lord Jesus. When opportunity was afforded him to talk with a poor Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, he did not say, "I came to preach the Gospel; and since this woman is only a Samaritan, I will not bother with her." When the disciples returned, they could not understand why the Master should be speaking with this woman instead of to a crowd. But Jesus, having the opportunity to preach, even if it were only to a Samaritan woman, improved his opportunity. He knew that through her the truth might go to others; that what she would learn she would tell to her neighbors, and that when the due time would come the Samaritans might hear and be all the more ready to benefit by the opportunity.

Wherever we find the opportunity to present the truth, we should appreciate the privilege. Of course we are not to annoy any one with whom we come in contact; but if there seems to be an opportunity to serve, it is for us to be about our Father's business, and to improve the opportunity—whether it is to speak the truth or merely to give a kind word, etc. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; for he hath anointed me to preach Good Tidings to the meek." God is seeking those who are kind and sympathetic, desirous of helping others.

It is our privilege to give a cheerful word at all times. As a rule people have sad experiences. Often there is a worm at the core, the heart. It has been noted that those who have committed suicide have sometimes laughed and joked a little while before taking their lives. The world would be in a terrible condition if everybody told all his troubles and carried his heart on his sleeve. It is better that they hide their troubles and that we cover ours from sight. It is better to cultivate the spirit which sings:

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

LITTLE TESTS OF CHARACTER

We should esteem it a privilege to address wrappers for tracts, or whatever the opportunity of the hour may be in the Lord's service. Should some one say, "I would rather preach," we reply, If the Lord opens up the way and gives you an opportunity to preach, do so. And if you have several opportunities to preach in one day, whether to one person, or to ten persons, or to a thousand, make use of them. But if you do not have any opportunity to preach, you may have the privilege of addressing wrappers. In this way you are instrumental in helping to place reading matter in the hands of others, even if the postman is the one who takes it to the house where it will be read. Or if our work is in the kitchen or any other part of the home, it is service of the Lord if we do all as unto him. But he kindly gives us opportunity to do something for the brethren.

So whatever we do, we are doing it for the Lord, we are doing it as unto him, doing it as he would have it done. There is a way of looking at things that makes us feel happy. It is a good think to ask ourselves occasionally, What am I seeking? What is my motive in doing this? For whom am I working?

As we thus work for the Lord and strive to please him, and cultivate the spirit of thankfulness for service in the little things, we shall be proving our worthiness for the great things. Our desire to render faithful service to the Lord will manifest itself in economy in the home and in consideration for others around us. Whoever will strike too many matches, or who will strike matches on the walls of the house, is thus manifesting that he is not fully trustworthy. Whoever whistles around the house to disturb others, or who gets up at a very early hour and makes so much noise that others cannot rest, or who comes in late at night and goes noisily to his room, demonstrates that he has not learned to observe the Golden Rule, has not learned to respect the rights of others.

The very beginning of all our conduct as members of the body of Christ should be the observance of the principles of justice. We should think as to what are the rights of others and as to whether we are impinging on those rights. If we find that we are so doing, we may know that we are violating the law of justice. In every circumstance of life, justice must come first, and afterwards we may be as kind and generous as possible.

"LORD, IS IT I?"

In respect to spiritual matters the principle is the same. Little rifts in the lute spoil the music. God is seeking a very special class for the kingdom. He desires those who will be absolutely loyal to him, loyal to his Word, faithful not only in some great thing, but also in the smallest affairs of life—faithful in thought, word and deed. Whoever is thus faithful, whoever exercises care in all these respects, will be fitting and preparing himself for the kingdom. Whoever is careless and inattentive to little things is not fit for the great honor the Lord has in store for the wholly faithful. He is watching us closely, but with a kindly eye. He wishes us to succeed. He gives us the necessary instruction and guidance. When we practice carefulness in little things, we are thereby developing our characters along right lines. If we fail to do this, we shall never become fit to be entrusted with important matters. Let us each make this a personal question: What kind of character am I developing as the days go by?

But the Christian who makes a mistake, and who sees his mistake and makes what amends are possible, will find his experience beneficial to him—perhaps throughout the remainder of his life. Through the castigation which he imposes upon himself he will learn greater carefulness. Care and

watchfulness are necessary, and we should see to it that they extend to every affair of life—to the use of our time, our talents, our money, etc. Whatever we have of these is from the Lord and belongs to him. We should therefore carefully consider what we shall do with these opportunities and be very conscientious in the use of them—how much we shall use for ourselves and how we shall use the remainder. Our course in these matters will show to the Lord whether or not we are fitted for a place in glory.

Our use or abuse of all the talents, great or small, entrusted to us by the Master will demonstrate how careful we are to note his will and to do that will in respect to this feature of our stewardship. By and by he purposes to give to the faithful those things which will be of far more value than dimes and dollars; affairs of great responsibility will be committed to them. If any have not been faithful—if any one has thought of the time, the dimes, the dollars, etc., as being his own, and has so used them, that one will not be of the class the Lord is seeking. He is viewing us according to the Covenant of Sacrifice which we have made with him. (Psalm 50:5) If we had a million dollars, it would be only a small thing in his sight. It is the manner in which we use the things of this life that manifests our loyalty to the Lord and that demonstrates how we would use the divine power during the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Our grandest opportunities for service are comparatively insignificant. But we are to appreciate even the least service which we may be able to render. We are to esteem that our service here is not to be compared with the things which the Lord has in reservation for those who love him. For a thousand years they are to reign with their Lord; and then will follow the ages to come" during which he will show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward them through Christ Jesus their Lord. (Ephesians 2:7) In view of this future inheritance of the saints in light, is it any wonder that our Lord wishes us to have kind, just, generous hearts? Our opportunity of being in the little flock will depend largely upon our appreciation of our opportunities for serving the Lord in the little things of the present life.

ELIJAH A GREAT PROPHET

AUGUST 29.—1 KINGS 17:1-16.

A FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE TRUE GOD—ELIJAH A TYPE OF THE CHURCH—THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH—THE ANTITYPICAL JEZEBEL AND AHAB—THE ANTITYPICAL 1260 DAYS OF SPIRITUAL FAMINE—REFORMATION BY SECTS—THE LATEST REFORM MOVEMENT.

***"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."*—1 Peter 5:7.**

Elijah was a great prophet. This fact is evidenced not only by the account of the Old Testament, from which our lesson is taken, but also by the words of Jesus respecting him, and the words of the Apostle James. (James 5:16-18) He comes to our attention as the Lord's mouthpiece to King Ahab, of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. He brought the king a threat of famine, assuring him that there would be no rain nor dew upon the land of Israel until Elijah would pray God for it. This meant drouth, famine, trouble. Elijah was not making this declaration on any authority of his own, but because it was the divine program and he had been so directed of the Lord. True prophets of God are not boastful, and never take honors or powers themselves. They speak merely as divine mouthpieces.

The reason for such a trouble, chastisement, coming upon King Ahab and the nation of Israel was that it was intended to be corrective, and additionally, as we shall see, it was prophetic or typical. The Israelites had gone into idolatry, and King Ahab had cooperated and had been a leader. The prophets of God had been persecuted, and the prophets of Baal had been honored. A great national chastisement might do them good. Accordingly, as stated in the first verse of our lesson, the issue was plainly declared to the king by Elijah, who then was directed to go to the brook Cherith.

This brook is in the mountainside, on the roadway leading from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea, near the place where the Jordan enters it. It was a lonely spot, and is now marked by an ancient convent. There, for three and a half years, the Prophet made his home, away from the public, and was fed by ravens, which brought him bread and flesh morning and evening. The water of the brook slaked his thirst. As the drouth continued, the brook finally dried up; and the Prophet was directed to the home of a widow of the town of Zarephath—beyond Israel's border, in the land of Zidon.

Jesus referred to this incident, remarking that the woman was a Gentile, and that the sending of Elijah to her implied that she was more worthy of the blessings he accorded than were any of the widows of the land of Israel. (Luke 4:25, 26) The poor widow had but a remnant of meal whereby to make a few cakes to sustain herself and her son; but at the Prophet's suggestion she had faith enough to share her little remnant with him. The result was a miracle. The remnant continued, as the Prophet had declared, throughout the famine. "The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by Elijah."

ELIJAH'S ANTITYPICAL PROPHECY

As already suggested, Elijah's prophecy was larger than on the surface appeared; for he and all of his doings were a type on a small scale of greater things which came afterwards. Elijah was a type of the church in the flesh—the church of which Jssus is the Head, and all of his saintly followers are the members. It was of this antitypical Elijah that God declared, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the children to the fathers, and the heart of the fathers to the children; otherwise I will come and smite the earth with a curse."—Malachi 4:5, 6.

Jesus and his apostles, and all of his followers, as the members of this greater Elijah, actuated by the Spirit of God, have been delivering a message to the world. They have been reproving sin, and making known to the world the righteousness of God. If the world had heeded the message, the kingdom of Messiah on the spirit plane would eventually have been ushered in, as the desire of all nations, without any great time of trouble, or "day of wrath," being necessary. But the world has not heeded the message of Jesus and his followers; and hence the smiting of the earth with a curse, the blow of the great time of trouble now beginning, is the only way by which Messiah's kingdom can be ushered in.

The nations, having accepted a form of godliness merely, and without the power and spirit of it, are Christian nations merely in name, not in fact, as the present great war for commercial supremacy of the world abundantly demonstrates. By this war and by the great revolution which the Bible declares will follow it, and by the world-wide anarchy which will result from the revolution, all the kingdoms of the world will be overthrown and all the present systems and institutions will be ground to powder, that the way for Messiah's kingdom, and its place, may be prepared. What did not come through obedience to the truth will come through the overthrow of those who heard but neglected, perverted and distorted the divine message of "Peace on earth, good will to men."

FULFILMENT OF THAT PROPHECY

That God meant Elijah to be a type of the church is confirmed to us by certain statements in the Revelation. The matter is there covertly presented, a great religious system being figuratively described as Jezebel, and the worldly system to which this professed church of Christ is united being represented by Ahab, the king of Israel. In this figure, as Elijah fled from Jezebel and Ahab's power for three and one-half years, so the church is said to flee into the wilderness to a place prepared for her, where she is miraculously sustained of the Lord for three and a half "Times," or symbolic years, otherwise explained as 42 months, or 1260 days.—Revelation 2:20-23; 12:6, 14; 13:5; 11:2, 3.

That long period of time when the true church was eclipsed by the success of Babylon marked the time of great spiritual drouth. As during the time of Elijah's absence at the brook Cherith and in Zidon there was no rain, so with the world, during those 1260 years there was no spiritual rain, no refreshment from on high. During that long period the Word of God, the Bible, was suppressed and neglected. The Bishops, Catholic and Protestant, suppressed it because if the people paid attention to the teachings of Jesus and the twelve apostles whom he appointed (St. Paul taking the place of Judas), they would proportionately ignore the teachings of the bishops who falsely proclaimed themselves "apostolic" bishops, and arrogated to themselves the power and authority which Jesus declared belonged only to the twelve. These

twelve our Lord declared to be the twelve stars to guide the church (Revelation 12:1), and the twelve foundation stones of the glorious New Jerusalem, which is about to be established.—Revelation 21:14.

It was during that dark time that there was a famine in the land, as mentioned by the Prophet—not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but a famine for the hearing of the Word of the Lord. (Amos 8:11, 12) According to the Bible those 1260 years of drouth began with the year 539 A. D., when ecclesiastical power attained persecuting ability, and ended in 1799 A. D., as its persecutions came to an end, at the time of Napoleon's great victory, when the pope was taken prisoner to France.

In another sense, however, the 1260 years would very properly extend from the year 325 A. D. to the year 1585 A. D. It was in the year 325 A. D. that the self-styled apostolic bishops convened under the patronage of Emperor Constantine, constituted themselves the Ecumenical Council of Nice, and formulated the first of the great creeds, the Nicene Creed. From that time onward for 1260 years the Bible was neglected; for the creeds made by these so-called apostolic bishops were accepted as instead of the Bible, as brief and comprehensive statements of its teachings, which alone were to be believed. Any one thereafter studying the Bible was esteemed to be finding fault with the creeds, and was correspondingly condemned. The creeds were studied, and the Bible thereafter was neglected.

It was during that long period of 1260 years that the egregious errors which have since troubled mankind became interwoven with the creeds of the dark ages. And it is since those 1260 years ended that the reform movement has prevailed—not a satisfactory reformation, according to the Bible, but a reformation by sects. Misguided by the thought that the church should be one of outward organization, each reformer gathered his followers to him and started a new sect, which claimed to be the true church. Undoubtedly the adversary had much to do with the organization of these various denominations, which nowhere have authority in the Bible. (1 Corinthians 1:11-13; 3:3-5) In recent times Christian people are realizing that none of these is the true church of Christ, which is composed only of saints; and they gather to the Lord, irrespective of denominational lines of any kind.

THE PILGRIM'S WANTS

[Reprint of poem in issue of January 15, 1904, which please see.]

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

"Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."—1 John 5:18.

When attempting to explain spiritual things, there is always a difficulty, particularly because we have only human words with which to express ourselves. Therefore, in order to make spiritual things clear, the Scriptures give us various similes and other figures of speech. In this text the Apostle John speaks of those who are begotten of God, those who have experienced a change of nature, who were first begotten according to the flesh, as children of Adam, and who have been begotten again—begotten of God. (1 Peter 1:3) Since our Lord's resurrection, God has been inviting some to come out from the world and become new creatures—no longer human beings, but spirit beings.

The first step toward this change of nature is the receiving of a new will. But we can see that it is a mistake to call the new will alone the new creature; for the new will comes to us before we receive the holy Spirit. It is the new will that presents our sacrifice. If we did not have the new will, we would not present our bodies a living sacrifice. The next step is that of the Redeemer's becoming a Surety for this sacrifice and for the attainment of the new nature. The third step is the Heavenly Father's acceptance of this sacrifice, of this slaying of the earthly nature by the Redeemer, and his giving of a special sign of his acceptance. That special sign of acceptance is the begetting of the holy Spirit.

It is very necessary that we keep the new human will separate and distinct from that which we receive at the begetting of the Spirit. We had the new will first; we desired and purposed to do God's will. Then we approached the Father in the way he had arranged—through our Redeemer. It is the new will that makes the sacrifice. The offering being presented, the merit of Jesus is applied, and thus the sacrifice becomes at once acceptable to the Father. Up to this point the will of the individual is still a human will, a new human will. The offering is then slain by the High Priest, our Lord Jesus, the acceptance of the Father being marked immediately by the begetting of the Spirit.

Just what God does at this juncture we do not fully understand. We do not understand clearly what a natural begetting is, though we have better means of understanding the natural begetting than of understanding the spiritual begetting. As to the spiritual begetting, we have the divine expression that it is the starting of a new life. The one receiving it gains a supernatural illumination. Thereafter he is a changed person, a new person, a new creature. He is now in Christ Jesus. He has new hopes, aims and objects, and is more and more enabled to apprehend spiritual things as the quickening influences of the holy Spirit operate upon his mind.

But all this is something that cannot be explained to those who have not taken the necessary steps by which spiritual things may be understood. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:9-15) Not until we have received this heavenly illumination can we discern them in the way of appreciating them fully. Spiritual discernment grows from a small beginning. "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." These old things pass away, not instantly, but gradually; and the starting point is marked by this expression, "begotten of God."

NEW CREATURE DOES NOT PRACTISE SIN

To be begotten of God, then, is to receive the beginning of a new life, a new nature. The Apostle John declares of such, "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin [doth not practise sin—Diaglott]." (1 John 3:9) So long as these are under such holy control, inspired by the great and precious promises, and possessing the holy will, they could not sin wilfully—could not practise sin in their lives.

We are to distinguish between a wilful sin and being overtaken by a fault. The reference in our text is to wilful sin, the practise of sin. The new creature cannot sin because it is the heavenly seed, the seed of the new nature. Every flower, every animal, sprang from a seed of life. However infinitesimal the seed may be, however embryotic, life is there. Likewise with the Christian; so long as any of the holy mind of God is present, there is life. But if he sins wilfully, this holy seed is dead. If this seed perish, the individual is dead as a new creature. Nothing would then await the individual but the second death; for he had been lifted out of the first, or Adamic death, and to die again would mean that he had come under the extreme penalty of God's law a second time. This would be an individual sentence, and would be eternal. Such would be "twice dead," as the Apostle Jude puts it—"plucked up by the roots."—Jude 12.

So we see the Apostle John's meaning—whoever is in the spirit-begotten condition, whoever has this embryo of the new nature, could not sin wilfully, could not take pleasure in sin, could not give himself over to sin. To do so would signify that he had lost this holy Spirit, and that he had become unholy again. As St. Peter explains, it would be like the sow that was washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. The Apostle John says that one begotten of the holy Spirit will "keep himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." He not only will not sin wilfully, but he will keep constantly on guard, watching himself, just as a watchman guards the castle or the city or the house. He watches all the doors, all the avenues of access.

THE NECESSITY FOR VIGILANCE

This thought of setting a watch over ourselves, of keeping ourselves so that the wicked one cannot touch or injure us, suggests another thought: The Lord himself is the great center of righteousness, purity, truth. All who are on the side of righteousness, purity, truth, will shun sin, will have no fellowship with it; for even if we should not really enter into sin in act, if we have any sympathy with it, we would be to that extent out of harmony with the Lord. As in a

circle the nearer to the center the greater the safety; so it is with the circle of righteousness, whose center is Jehovah himself.

The slightest sympathy with sin would cause the child of God to depart to that extent from the center of purity. As he widened the distance between himself and the Lord, he would draw nearer to the outer rim of the circle. Think of an island surrounded by water infested with crocodiles. The person who would remain in the center of the island would be perfectly safe from those enemies. But the nearer one approached to the coast line, the greater his danger. So Satan is represented as a wily foe; and to the extent that any of us would not watch himself, he would be getting nearer to the circumference of that circle. Any sympathy with what is not in the fullest harmony with the mind of the Lord, any participation in sin, would carry him closer and closer to the place of danger. The intimation of the Scriptures is that such a one would be in great danger of being touched, caught, by the great adversary and his demon host, to his injury, perhaps to his ruin.

Presumably every Christian has had something of this experience of drawing near to the place of danger. In proportion as we live near to the Lord, we are under divine protection. In proportion as we waver in our loyalty, we come nearer to the adversary. One might thus endanger himself without actually sinning. His heart might still be true to the Lord, yet he might be touched by sin by being involved with others in some way. Therefore the Word of God warns us to watch our actions, to watch our companionship, our conduct, to abide "in the secret place of the Most High," to "make straight paths for our feet," lest that which is weak and lame be turned out of the way. Rather, let it be healed, by keeping very close to our God, as far away as possible from the point of danger.

A WORD OF PASTORAL COUNSEL

We note a strong similarity in some respects between our spiritual and our natural experiences. We must partake of food if we would have strength. For the new creature in Christ, God's Word has provided this necessary food—milk for babes, strong meat for those of greater development. As we feed upon the gracious promises of God's Word, they strengthen our hearts and nerve our energies for patient endurance and active service for the glory of our King, for the blessing of the brethren, and for our own spiritual upbuilding. We perceive that one great lack amongst Christian people in general is that very many have ceased to partake of the spiritual food which the Heavenly Father has provided for the nourishment of his people. Many, therefore, are weak and sickly spiritually; and many have fallen asleep in respect to spiritual matters, having become overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, money-lust, and the excitement of business and pleasure.—Mark 4:18, 19.

Since we have come to a knowledge of present truth we find our spiritual appetite sharpening more and more. We are growing day by day by means of the nourishment supplied. We love the strong meat. We take delight in masticating it. A work of Bible study is progressing all over the world, the like of which was never before known. The classes of the I. B. S. A. are becoming known for their knowledge of the Word of God, collectively and individually. The world, especially the "Christian world," is taking knowledge of them.

But here we need to note dangers threatening these Bible Students. And these dangers we especially call to the attention of the class leaders. The first is that it is true in respect to spiritual feasting as in respect to natural feasting, that we need liquids as well as solids. By solids we refer to those spiritual foods which require mastication, mental assimilation, investigation, etc. From these we derive our strength. The liquid refreshments correspond more particularly to our spiritual fellowship which is non-doctrinal; namely, exhortation, praise, worship, testimony respecting the Lord, our personal relationship with him, his gracious providential care over us, etc. The class that neglects the liquid refreshments is sure to feel the loss. As the physical system requires the liquids to carry the nutriment properly to all parts, so the spiritual organism requires the liquid refreshments to carry the strength of the nutriment of the doctrines of Christ to every member for the mutual refreshment of all.

Again, it is noticed that while both solids and liquids are needed, it is preferable not to use the two at the same time. He who washes his solid food down with liquid refreshment fails to get all the nutriment out of it, because he masticates less. As the process of digestion is begun in the mouth, where the saliva is mixed thoroughly with the food, the washing of the food down with liquids interferes with an important part of digestion. Therefore, all physicians advise that little liquid be taken with the solids, but that at appropriate times a sufficiency of liquids be supplied to the system. So we advise in the spiritual eating—that the solids, the doctrines of the Word of God, be thoroughly masticated, with comparatively little of testimony or exhortation intermingled—just a little of praise and worship to give a proper setting. Then let the spiritual liquids be appropriated in full measure at suitable seasons.

INTERESTING LETTERS

RE THE "SPIRIT OF DIVISION"

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Last month we wrote you asking for separate pilgrim visits, and we have your reply of June 25th suggesting the possibility of our triumph over the "spirit of division," and stating your intention of making suggestion to the —— class that a portion of the time of the visiting pilgrim brother be given to us.

For your letter we wish to thank you, and to thank our Heavenly Father whose providences are over us. We do not want to have the spirit of division, and we continually search our hearts for that which we must overcome, and do continually pray and study the Word for the holy Spirit in our hearts, and for the spirit of a sound mind. We will welcome reproof, correction, guidance, as the Lord may send it.

By the favor of God we have one chief desire: to be in accord with his will, to make our calling and election sure, to love and serve the brethren—and all in his way. Day by day our most earnest desire for these things increases, and we are determined to be his children wholly, believing his promises, believing these things are his will for us. In humility and thankfulness we testify that we are being dealt with as sons. So, if it should be the Father's will, we do desire to have the pilgrim brethren visit us, and our request was made if we know our hearts, without a thought of complaint against or criticism of others.

The regular —— class was organized before our coming into it; the leaders have an established policy, so to speak. From time to time it has seemed to us that the Scriptures, and our Pastor's faithful interpretation of them, were not being followed, which developed to an issue between us, and we quietly resigned and withdrew—absolutely without harshness, with words and thoughts of love. We continually pray for each of them, we yearn for them and miss them, and search our own hearts to see if we can find bitterness or wrong that must be gotten out.

Our consecration is to God our Father, as we will it, and not to anything or anybody else. We will to choose his way, and pray for wisdom to see it and grace to walk in it, and we wish for fellowship with the pilgrim brethren to this end alone. No class meetings are held here with the pilgrims—the meetings being either public or semi-public—and we feel the need of heart-to-heart meetings with these brethren, at times when there will be no outsiders present.

Our withdrawal from the class was not hasty, but only prompt when the choice was necessary as to whom we must follow. It is not our thought to recite a grievance—we have none—nor disappointment, nor hurt, nor regret; for the ordering is of the Lord, and we are rejoicing in his providence.

So in this matter we are thankful in advance for what shall be done. All of the children of God are so safe! and we have very great cause for blessing and praising his name, feeling we shall be cared for. I have tried to write from the heart—sincerely. If you have any further suggestion or counsel, or if nothing more be considered necessary, we shall think it well.

Looking over into the Land, the tabernacling days nearly over, the world in fear, the way each day yet narrower, how could we have time or inclination to quarrel with the brethren! I pray your hearts may be continued in patient endurance; we daily speak of you in love and sympathy. God bless you!

In Christ, faithfully yours, ———.

SOME EUREKA Y DRAMA ITEMS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Having had so many good experiences and rich blessings connected with the EUREKA Y DRAMA and colporteur work, particularly this Spring, we wish to advise you of some of them.

And then our recent visit to Chicago, where we had the privilege of hearing you and others speak encouraging words to harvesters, reinforced by personal talks with many, has stirred us further to write you.

Two brothers and sisters are now working Peoria and Knox counties (Ill.). The brothers travel in a wagon—a real DRAMA wagon. In this they carry all their baggage, besides the DRAMA machines, sleeping tent and cooking utensils. Between towns they canvass the farmers, which helps financially. When money sales cannot be made, books are frequently exchanged for eggs, butter, vegetables, bread, grain for their horse, etc. In this way, opportunities frequently come to present the truth to a class who have not hitherto been reached.

We two sisters have a little more expense traveling on trains, but this is soon offset by the sale of books in the towns. We canvass during the three days in which the DRAMA is shown, and often exchange books for room and table board.

The Colporteur work in these ways we find much more interesting and blessed. We find, too, as others have, that the trouble in the world is waking people up and they listen with interest to our message.

We show the EUREKA Y in three parts, thus averaging six entertainments a week. Our audiences number from fifty to three hundred; many of these are from the country. Sometimes we have had the use of very good halls free, other times paying only a small sum. The carbide light is used where there is no electricity and it works successfully at a very small cost—about fifteen cents per entertainment. We are now planning to give some open-air exhibitions in parks.

Our EUREKA Y is practically self-supporting. We have talked with several who have the EUREKA Y lying idle because of lack of funds, and thought these few items would be of interest and help to others.

We realize every day the great privilege of the harvest work, particularly at this time, and that our sacrifice is very small compared with the blessings with which our Father rewards our humble efforts. We give him thanks and praise for every manifestation of his great love and for the increasing light as it is presented in THE WATCH TOWER. We also thank him for that faithful and wise servant, and pray richest blessings upon him. With much Christian love,

Yours in joyful service, EMMA ANDERSON.

AWAKENED BY THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

We write to apprise you of the fact that a class of Bible Students in this town have organized as an Ecclesia—24 members—Brother W. Sargent of Halifax officiating; and have voted you in as Pastor and Elder. Five deacons were chosen from the class.

Your PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION awakened us when it was given in this town last August. We met together just after that to study "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and shortly, "We who sat in darkness saw a great light."

Our class of truth seekers steadily increased until now we number over 50 regular attendants besides many irregular ones. Out of this Bible Class 24 have made a full consecration of their life to the Lord; and we, who six months ago "were not a people," are now a people of God. A few of us had lived the consecrated life for some years; the rest came out of the world's people, some with socialist, others infidel tendencies, etc. We are indeed grateful to our Heavenly Father and his Son our Redeemer and to you for this precious harvest truth which has reached our ears late in this acceptable day of sacrifice. But thank God, at last "we have found him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote," yea, the apostles, too; and now the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation has become luminous and we are finding a mine of precious treasure.

We want you to know that this class in this little corner of the world have the utmost confidence in you as the Lord's faithful servant, used to deliver his message, in spite of the fact that from every pulpit in this town and the adjoining city of Sydney you and your teachings are being denounced as worse than false. We are consumed with a desire to spread this truth; and though sometimes we cast our pearls before swine that turn again and rend us, yet many people find it good news and seek for more. Praying the Lord's rich blessing upon you, we are

Yours in The Christ,

ECCLESIA AT GLACE BAY.—*Nova Scotia.*

CREATION DRAMA UPSETS BELIEF IN SPIRITISM

MY DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

I feel I must write and tell you that the beautiful CREATION DRAMA, shown at the Opera House, Kings Way, has entirely changed my life.

I believed in Spiritism, and when I discovered the fall of the Nephilim, before the flood of Noah's day, and read about it, my belief was capsized at once.

I have bought two of the SCENARIOS, two sets of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and a lovely Bible. I also get THE WATCH TOWER. I thank God for all his goodness, and may he bless you for all your good works. I pray that many others may be brought home through your instrumentality.

I have already found a dear friend in the truth, and hope I may be enabled to do good work as she does, in a village to which I am soon going.

Thanking you so much and praying God to bless and keep you, I remain

Yours faithfully, K. SMITH.—*England.*

GREEK AND POLISH "WATCH TOWERS"

Greek Brethren full of zeal for the Lord and the truth have started the publication of THE WATCH TOWER in the Greek language. It is not set in type, but mimeographed.

Additionally, every other week they issue a translation of a portion of the sixth volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

The number of Greeks interested is not very large, but they are showing a very commendable zeal. Any Greek brethren desiring to obtain the above-mentioned Greek translations will please address THE WATCH TOWER Office.

Our Polish friends, too, are preparing for themselves regular issues of THE WATCH TOWER in Polish—translations from the English edition. Sample copies on application.

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PRIVILEGES OF THE THRONE OF GRACE

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 4:16.

While these words of the Apostle have always been applicable to the people of God, they are especially important to us, for we realize that we are now living in this very evil day to which he referred in his letter to the Ephesians; that it has already come, and that only those who have put on the whole armor of God will be properly equipped to withstand the assaults of the enemy. His instruction that the Christian supply himself with the whole armor of God indicates a need for the armor, a difficulty in withstanding the attacks to be expected in this day, and the fewness of those, who will eventually stand. The exhortation is not to take merely the shield of faith, not merely the helmet of salvation, not merely the breastplate of righteousness, not merely the Sword of the Spirit, not merely the sandals of preparation, not merely the girdle of truth; but all of these. The implication is that we shall need all of these if we stand all the assaults to be expected in the evil day.

Alas, how few seem to realize the importance of this armor which God has commended! Their difficulty is the result of their not recognizing the time in which they are now living, of their not being sufficiently awake, of not being zealous to search the Scriptures, and to arm themselves therewith for the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty.

But with all the preparation the earnest Christian may make, he should see to it that there is a direct and continual communication between his heart and his Lord. In the Bible God has given us his message, his promises, his instruction, in advance. Elsewhere St. Paul has declared that this Word "is

sufficient, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." We appreciate this assurance and also realize our own unworthiness, our littleness and our imperfections. But despite all these our Lord has assured us that we may approach with courage the throne of heavenly grace and there obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need—and forgiveness of sins.

This promise of forgiveness does not include the thought of original sin; for that is forgiven us at the time when we consecrate ourselves to the Lord; and therefore it need not be remembered day by day. But, having surrendered our will to the Lord and having started out in the narrow way, we should know what our reasonable service to him would include. (Romans 12:1) We have need of every provision that he has made for us. It is our daily transgressions that require daily forgiveness. Any one, therefore, who would be a good soldier of the Lord Jesus must keep in close touch with headquarters. This he is privileged to do by coming daily to the throne of grace.

If we would contrast the privilege of approaching God with that of approaching earthly potentates, we would see a marked manifestation of God's favor in us. With the King of England or the German Kaiser or any other earthly sovereign, the dignity of the throne is maintained so that it is difficult for any to approach. One must earnestly desire to do so. And if he would come into the king's presence, he must wear a certain style of dress, observe a certain etiquette, and also have a proper introduction. If the king were gracious, an interview might then be granted. But our God, the Mighty Creator of the Universe, has graciously granted to each one who has been begotten of the holy Spirit the privilege of bringing everything to him in prayer—all his needs, all his difficulties—and of calling him by the endearing name of "Father." What wondrous grace!

Then each of God's children before approaching the throne of grace should seek to know what things are approved of the Lord and what things are disapproved. It should be the one ambition of the child of God to know the Father's will and to guide his affairs accordingly. But taking it for granted that our hearts are fully submissive to the Lord's will, the Apostle is here describing the Christian soldier who has put on the whole armor of God, or who is putting it on, and who is seeking to come up to the highest standard. He will need, with all his armor, to cultivate and to use the privilege of prayer.—Ephesians 6:18.

THE MANNER OF ACCEPTABLE PRAYER

The foregoing reference tells us how prayer should be offered—"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." We should lay emphasis on the words "in the Spirit." Contrast this sort of prayer with others which are not "in the Spirit," but merely formalistic. We know that the heathen have great formalities in their prayers. The Chinese, for instance, have a wheel on which certain prayers are inscribed, and they think that the more times the wheel is turned around the more times the prayer goes up to their god. These are vain repetitions. But the Chinese are heathen—they have not learned of the true God. Others approach the true God, using vain repetitions, not knowing what they want or what is best for them or what is God's will. Some Christians use printed forms of petition which are not really their own sentiment or spirit, but which as worshipers they offer to the Lord in a more or less perfunctory manner. Some prayers are represented by beads. These are used by our Roman Catholic friends. Each bead represents a prayer, and the repetition is supposed to help the worshiper. He counts these beads over and over, repeating his prayer over each bead.

All these endeavors on the part of humanity, heathen and Christian, to approach God in prayer indicate that there is a recognized need of divine assistance. But God is not to be approached in a merely formal manner. He is not to be mocked. If we should approach an earthly king in such a perfunctory way, he would see through the hollowness of the petition and would resent it. And so we may know that if we come with merely a lip service to God our prayers will not be heard. We must remember, too, that only those prayers are acceptable to God which come from those in covenant relationship with him through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way by which we have a right to come to the Almighty addressing him as "Our Father."

Reverting again to the text, "Praying always, with all prayer and supplication—in the Spirit," we understand the Apostle to mean that with every prayer we offer, whatever may be our petition, there should be an earnestness of spirit. The prayer must always be offered "in the spirit," with heart-appreciation of what we are doing. Otherwise it would not be acceptable to God. It must be a "supplication," an earnest entreaty. When we pray to God, we are to "watch thereunto, with all perseverance"—having importunity in prayer, not soon growing weary if our petitions do not seem to be quickly answered. We are not to pray for the things that the Word of God does not justify us in believing are the Lord's will, but for the things which we believe are his will; and we are to really desire what we ask for. Then we are to watch for the fulfilment of our prayers, and thus be prepared for the blessing when it comes. Our Father knoweth what things we have need of before we ask him.—Matthew 6:32, 8.

SELFISH PETITIONS UNJUSTIFIED

The object of prayer, then, is to benefit ourselves, and to bring us into that attitude of mind which will be in heart-readiness to receive our Father's blessing. God does not wish to give his choicest blessings where they would be fruitless. When he gives us these blessings he purposes that our hearts shall be in that condition which will assimilate them and bring forth fruitage. We must ever be in an attitude of full submission to his will. We know that our Heavenly Father not only has the fullest knowledge of our needs, but is waiting to bestow his richest gifts upon his children, as soon as we are ready for them. Then let us never come before him with vain, meaningless repetitions.

While the world would pray merely for food, clothing, temporal blessings or for victory over their enemies, we as God's children should yield up our wills to him and pray in the words of our Master's exemplary prayer: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done." Then, "Give us this day our daily bread," whether it be little or much—not saying what kind of food, but simply receiving what he sees we need. We have placed these matters entirely in the Lord's hands. We ask especially for the spiritual bread. Our prayers are to be along the lines of the Spirit and not of the flesh. We are to pray only incidentally for the earthly things, because we have consecrated our bodies to God. Since the body is to die, since it has been accepted as a sacrifice, we are to seek to perpetuate that body which we have given to the Lord only long enough for our spiritual development and testing and for the completion of whatever work he has for us to do. We are also to be willing and glad to surrender it as soon as the Lord is ready to consummate the sacrifice. We have it now only as the instrument of the new creature.

As new creatures, then, we are to pray always in harmony with the interests of this new nature. We are to hunger for the bread from heaven and to feed upon it. We are to develop the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. We read that the Father is more willing to give good things to them that ask him than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. So then, we are not only to pray in the Spirit, but as the Lord's Word indicates, our prayers are to be along the lines of the Spirit, of the new creature, whose needs are first in our sight and in the Lord's sight, and whose interests the Lord is especially pleased to bless and to have us consider and pray for.

THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH

The logical conclusion of all this is that the Lord's consecrated people would have little to pray for of an earthly kind, realizing that with the church the end is not restitution, but sacrifice unto death, and then the glorious resurrection. Therefore the prayers of the consecrated should be for grace to meet in a faithful spirit our various trials and difficulties while we are putting on the armor, and likewise after we have put it on, and are learning how to use the Sword of the Spirit, how to resist the adversary, and the foes entrenched in our own flesh—our Philistines. We need much grace to be rightly exercised by the trials and the assaults of the enemy and to realize that all these things are to work together for good to us who love God, who are "the called according to his purpose." We are learning day by day how to "make our calling and election sure."

The Lord's people are encouraged to take part in the prayer meeting, and individually they are to approach daily the throne of grace. Our Lord has declared that when two or three are met together in his name he will be in their midst. When a petition is made having something of general interest, we are to unite our hearts that the blessing may be spread abroad and extend to many hearts. The suggestion is that the Lord's people should do considerable of their praying in fellowship, in cooperation. But this would not hinder our private praying to the Lord, hourly if need be, telling him of our realization of our faults and our weaknesses and asking for the application of the precious merit of our Savior's sacrifice to remove every spot and every wrinkle from our garments. Such prayer is the very essence of the Christian's life, his "vital breath."

We find that the encroachments of the adversary and of

the world and of the flesh are liable to discourage us or to entangle us with the things of the present life. But the Lord has made it so possible for us to approach him that we can go to him with any trial, any difficulty, and be sure that our petition has divine attention and will have divine aid. We have spoken of our fleshly weaknesses as sometimes hindering us from prayer. There is a disposition on the part of many Christians, after having done something that has wounded the conscience, to avoid going to the Lord in prayer for awhile, to dread to go, to feel ashamed to go—thinking that they will feel better about it afterwards. This course in fraught with great danger; for it is likely to hinder our spiritual growth. Therefore it should not be permitted. We should realize that there is all the greater need of our going then to the throne of heavenly grace. The Lord has known of our weaknesses in advance. He knew beforehand of our failure, and wished us to profit by the experience, that we might, in harmony with our prayers, become stronger against sin, against everything displeasing to him.

ONE OF SATAN'S CHIEF METHODS OF ATTACK

The adversary has to do, no doubt, with seeking to interrupt our prayers, our communications with the Father. One of our hymns declares that

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

We need not go to this extreme of thought, that Satan really does so tremble; but we may know that he realizes something of the power of prayer in the life of the child of God, and one of his chief lines of attack is to seek to cut off our communication with the Lord. Just as in warfare a skillful general seeks to cut off the enemy from its communication with headquarters, with its base of supplies, so with Satan. If he could succeed in cutting off our communication with the heavenly courts, we would be so much more liable to fall under his mischievous and wicked assaults. Then we would indeed be helpless, without divine direction.

Is it asked, What could Satan do to cut off our communication? We reply that there are various ways of intruding upon the human mind—thoughts may enter the mind while the child of God is at prayer or at other times—thoughts of business, of pleasure, of sin, of worldly interests and projects, etc. We do not know how much power the adversary is given in connection with the Lord's people. We do know that he is powerless to resist their will. But he has power to stimulate certain organs of our minds, so that unless we are very alert we might be cut off from proper fellowship with the Lord, and our Christian courage might become more or less weakened. Thus we would be proportionately less able to resist the world, the flesh and the adversary.

It is, therefore, proper to take every precaution to keep the lines of communication with our Heavenly Father well open. For instance, in private prayer, if there is a tendency towards drowsiness or toward thoughts going to other things, then we might lift the head, if it be bowed; or if the eyes be closed, we might open the eyes, and raise them. We are to see to it that in all our prayers and supplications these are in the Spirit, that they are not perfunctory, not formalisms. We are to see to it that they are the real expressions of our heart. We may say that a few sentences of real heart-prayer will accomplish more good for the child of the Lord than any amount of lip service. We advise that any who have difficulty in keeping the mind concentrated while in prayer should intensify and shorten their petitions and that in all their prayers they should see that the things they desire and pray for are in harmony with the Lord's Word—in the interest of the new creature.

"BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART"

"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful is nothing pure; but both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to have known God, but by their works they renounce him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work worthless." "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—Titus 1:15, 16; Proverbs 4:23.

Our first text is an extremely severe arraignment. The context seems to imply that the Apostle Paul was addressing some who were identified in a sense with the cause of God, but whose doctrines and manner of life were in conflict with the message of the Gospel. Whether he referred to unbelieving Jews or to those who had at least outwardly become followers of Christ we may not be sure. He was referring, at any rate, to those who professed to have known God, whether they knew him through the law or through the Gospel. The language seems to imply that these were fault-finders. They could find fault with everything—nobody could do anything just right, no doctrines were right. We have all met people of this character—people who see nothing pure, nothing good, anywhere, and who are denouncing others all the time.

The Apostle's statement is very strong, very forceful—"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unfaithful is nothing pure." We understand him to mean by these words, not literally that the pure could find nothing that is impure, nor that the impure could find nothing pure, but that is true in a broad, general way. Those who are themselves pure can see righteousness in the divine law and in the divine arrangement. They can see the true, pure hearts of God's sincere "little ones," in spite of the weaknesses of the fallen flesh. But the unfaithful become defiled, their consciences become perverted, so that they are unable to see anything or anybody in a proper light. They have permitted ill-natured thoughts to enter the mind and lodge there—suspicions, evil surmisings, such as, "Every man has his price. Every man can be bought. There is not one that is honest"; and all that sort of thing. They have been more or less judging others by themselves.

Not only the minds of such become corrupted, seeing nothing pure, nothing good, nothing right, in others; but their consciences become defiled. At first the conscience of such would to some extent reprove them. But gradually, if they yield to this wrong attitude, their consciences become corrupt and hardened, so that they do not realize that they are prevaricating, misjudging, do not see how unjust, impure and blind they have become. "They profess to have known God," says the Apostle—knowing something in an intellectual way about his plan and Word—"but by their works they deny him." Their works are contrary to God's Word, which instructs that all should seek to do all the good they can, to see all the good they can, and to give generous judgment to others.

FAULT-FINDERS, ACCUSERS OF THE BRETHREN

These defiled ones deny God, renounce him in their works—as St. Paul declares, they are "abominable, and disobedient" to God, walking contrary to his instructions. This is surely an abominable thing to do—after knowing the Lord to go in an opposite direction, and set his counsel at naught. Such are "to every good work worthless." They do not accomplish anything good, but the very opposite; yet they find fault with everybody else.

The Apostle is not saying here that such have necessarily become immoral and vile in that they have become delvers into all kinds of sin and vice. We are not to read into his words anything that is not there. But he does say that so far as any good work is concerned they will defile it, injure it. Better would it be that they keep away from the Lord's work entirely. They have allowed the bitter spirit to work in them until everything takes on the color of their own minds. They do not recognize to what an extent they are unjust, unrighteous, in their thoughts, their words, their conduct. They are injurious to every good work.

There are lessons of warning here for all of us, lest we should be led astray by the spirit of the wicked one and become mere fault-finders, accusers of the brethren—not giving our time, our hands, our feet, our tongues, to doing good, to blessing, and upbuilding the brethren, but rather to tearing down. In proportion as any one does this, he is worthless, yea, worse than worthless, to the Lord and to his cause.

NECESSITY FOR GUARDING THE HEART

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," exhorts the Wise Man. The thought embodied in this exhortation is of the utmost importance. Truly these are words of wisdom! As the heart is perhaps the most important organ of the human body, so the word "heart" is here used in a figurative way to represent the center of the affections of the human mind. The implication is that the heart needs keeping. There are many things to distract, to draw away, to lead astray. Not only the burden of business, but also the trend of the world in general and of our fallen flesh, tend to lead the heart away from righteousness, from the service of God, from purity, love and kindliness toward others.

The great adversary also gives his assistance in attempts to thus mislead. The heart—the will, the affections—of every human being should be loyal to God and to righteousness. It was made so originally. As the magnetic needle turns to the

pole, so the human heart should turn to the Lord. Anything to the contrary represents a sinful, distorted, perverted condition. But as a matter of fact, sin has become firmly implanted in the fallen human nature. During these long centuries of sin many people have striven to keep their hearts right with God. But after getting right, the majority fail to abide in that condition, to keep their heart in God's love, to keep it from going into wrong avenues, from getting into the wrong condition.

We often have difficulty in managing our bodies. There are appetites of the flesh that need constant watching. The tongue needs constant guarding. While we are to watch all these things carefully, yet the most important thing to watch is the heart; for all our evil tendencies have their mainspring there. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things." We should be ever alert to see that our heart is kept pure, true. If we find impurities there, they should be prayerfully fought against and made right. We should keep our minds filled with that which is pure, worthy, Godlike.

As children of God we have learned that the only way to have our hearts right with our Father is through the Lord Jesus Christ. We have come to God through Christ and thus become his sons, receiving his holy Spirit. Then we have a new influence, a new fountain, opened to the heart, which changes its current, which sweetens its outflow. Thenceforth we love righteousness and hate iniquity. If there is any variation from this at any time, we should see that we are promptly brought back into alignment with the Spirit of the Lord. We need to keep our heart continually under inspection, so that we may abide in close fellowship with the Father and with our Lord Jesus.

"For out of it [the heart] are the issues of life," declared Solomon. From this organ—the heart—the blood is pumped out to all parts of the body. The body is thus dependent upon the heart for its strength, its vitality, its very life. The body would be dead if the heart did not continually propel the blood through the system. So the issues of our bodily life are going forth from the heart every day, yea, every moment. It is either issuing little life or much life each day. So it is with the seat of our affections—so it is with our will. All who come in contact with us day by day are influenced for good or for evil by the spirit we manifest. It is highly important that all our conduct in life should be under the proper direction of a pure heart—one that is carefully watched and kept under inspection, so that today as we go forth, a good issue shall flow out from our heart to others. Thus the Lord will be pleased with us, and will count us "dear children." Thus shall our minds and consciences be kept undefiled.

THE FINAL ISSUE—LIFE OR DEATH

But there is a further sense, a vital sense, in which the issues of life are from the heart. God has informed us that though he sentenced our race to death, he has made provision for a future and an eternal life for all. And the conditions on which any may have this eternal life are set forth in the Scriptures. They tell us of certain things that must be done. To us who are called and accepted now it is important that we do all we are able to do, because by nature we have sin entrenched in our flesh. Like all of Adam's race, we are imperfect by nature through his fall; but the Lord informs us that if we become his children he will judge us by the heart—by our will, our intention, our desire, our efforts. Therefore when we are thinking of the glorious prize, we are to remember that the ultimate issue of this matter, the final decision, will depend altogether upon how we have fulfilled the conditions. It is as in a court, where a jury is sworn in to decide what the verdict shall be—whether in favor of one party or the other party. There will be an issue on our case, a decision, from which there will be no appeal.

The world will be on trial in the next age, but the church of Christ is on trial now—from the time they are begotten of the holy Spirit. The new life is on trial. Our new heart is before the bar of divine judgment. That new heart, then, needs keeping very carefully, since connected with it are the issues of eternal life or eternal death. Our hopes are not dependent on a perfect body; some may have a sick body, some may have a naturally amiable disposition, and others not. But our old bodies are reckoned dead from the moment we become new creatures, and the new creature is responsible for the control of the body to the best of its ability. These new hearts are to be kept loyal to God, to the principles of righteousness, truth, equity—loyal to our covenant. If we fail properly to cultivate Christ-like character, if we fail to keep in attunement with the Lord, then we shall never develop as new creatures in Christ. And when the decisive testings come, we shall be found wanting.

The Lord has promised to give the blessing of glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with Jesus, to those who during the Gospel age attain his character-likeness. And that character-likeness to God will demonstrate our loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to the divine will. In the case of our Lord Jesus, he was willing, glad, to sacrifice everything to do the Father's will. So must it be with all who would be counted in with Christ. The issues, the results, of our life are here. God says to us, as followers of Christ, as his professed disciples, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Choose life that ye may live." Life is the blessing; death is the curse. All through the Bible this thought is maintained—that the gift of God is his blessing of eternal life, and that "the wages of sin," is the curse of death—not torment.

So to the Christian the issue of our life here on earth is life eternal, if we are faithful. Failing to gain the life eternal, we shall go into death—the second death; for if we are disloyal to the principles of righteousness and to the opportunities granted us in this trial for everlasting life that has come to us in the Gospel age, there remains no future opportunity for us. These words apply to those who have really become children of God, who have tasted of the "heavenly gift." How important, then, to keep our hearts true, loyal, undefiled!

FINAL ISSUE OF LIFE DIFFERING IN DEGREE

Amongst those in whose cases the issue will be everlasting life, there will be different ranks, as regards the degree of honor and blessing. As the Apostle pictures it, "For star differeth from star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead"—so it will be with those who have a part in the first resurrection. Some will have a brighter glory in the kingdom than others. We might say that there will be various issues—greater honor and less honor. As elsewhere shown in the Scriptures, there are two classes who will gain everlasting life on the spiritual plane of being. Many will be of the great company; some will be of the little flock, the bride of Christ. Some will attain the highest plane, immortality; but more will get life similar to that of the angels, on a lower spirit plane.

So we see the wisdom of the Scriptural exhortation that the heart needs constant attention, because there are such important, vital issues in respect to it. And we see the wisdom in warning of the danger of permitting the mind and the conscience to become defiled and impure. Some might say, "I will be very careful about every word I speak." Very well so far. But to keep the tongue would not alone be sufficient to give eternal life; for the heart might be quite different from the tongue in some cases. One might be able to speak very smoothly, yet have a deceitful, impure heart. Again, one might say, "I will watch my body, and not sin with it." But that would not be enough. We must get down to the source. The Lord is looking at the desires, the intentions of the heart, in his people. This needs special watching, because the heart is the battle-ground, so great are the issues from it—life or death. If life, then we desire that we may have the highest place that God is willing to grant us. And it is ours by meeting the conditions.

JEHOVAH OUR GOD IS ONE

"To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things."—1 Corinthians 8:6.

Notwithstanding the wide-spread acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, we have held closely to the Bible teaching that there is but one God. Jesus called God his Father, and spoke of himself as the Son of God. A father is a life-giver. A son is an offspring, one who receives life from a father. This distinction implies that the father existed first. And so Jesus says of himself, "I proceeded forth and came from God."—John 8:42.

In our writings we show the clear teachings of the Bible, that Jesus in his pre-human condition was the Logos, the Word, or message, from the Father; and that as such he was called a god, but not the God—the Father. On so important a question as the equality of the Father and the Son, we must not rely upon any man's testimony except that of the inspired writers of the Scriptures. We should accept no dictum save that of the divine Word itself. Let us ask Jesus. He replies, "My Father is greater than I"; "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear I judge"; "My Father is greater than all"; "I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God";

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John 14:28; 5:30; 10:29; 17:3; 20:17.

In our writings we point out that Jesus was the first of God's creatures, the only being directly created by Jehovah; and that Jehovah did all subsequent creating through the Son. Thus we read that Jesus was "the beginning of the creation of God," "the first-born of every creature," "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last of the Father's direct creation. (Revelation 3:14; 22:13; Colossians 1:15) The Apostle John declares (John 1:1-3), "In the beginning [not Jehovah's beginning, for he had no beginning; but the world's beginning, or man's beginning] was the Word [the Logos], and the Word was with the God and the Word was a god. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." Could this subject be made plainer? Why confuse ourselves needlessly? Why fight against the plain statements of God's Word to uphold a theory which is without Bible support and was formulated in the dark ages?

We teach, as does the Bible, that the Lord Jesus came from heaven to earth; was born of a virgin mother; that he, "the Logos, was made flesh and dwelt among us," and his disciples "beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth!" (John 1:14) Jesus had not two natures, but one nature, having changed the higher, the spiritual nature, for the human nature. As the Scriptures declare, "He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." (2 Corinthians 8:9) And as he grew to manhood he grew in favor with God and man. He was perfect—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."—Luke 2:52; Hebrews 7:26.

JESUS BECAME A NEW CREATURE

At thirty years of age, this Perfect One, having reached the perfection of manhood according to the law consecrated, or devoted, his life to God as the great sacrifice for human sin, fulfilling the Scriptures, "a body hast thou prepared me," "for the suffering of death." (Hebrews 10:5; 2:9) That consecrated sacrifice of the Man Jesus God accepted, indicating his acceptance by the anointing of Jesus with the holy Spirit at Jordan. Thenceforth he was dual—a perfect human body with a newly begotten mind—spirit-begotten. He then, as a new creature, was to complete the sacrifice of his flesh; and his new mind—the new creature—was to go on to perfection. He prayed that the Father would restore him to the glory which he had with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5) In his humility he asked no higher glory. His sacrifice was finished at Calvary, and his new mind, his spirit-begotten new nature was, in the resurrection, granted the new body which the Father had promised. "Sown in dishonor," he was "raised in glory"; "sown in weakness," he was "raised in power"; "sown a natural body," he was "raised a spiritual body."—1 Corinthians 15:43, 44.

Our Lord was not originally created in the way the angels were; for he was the direct creation of the Father, whereas the angels were the indirect creations of God, through the Son. St. Paul declares that all things are of the Father, and all things are through, by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6) He was the Father's honored agent in all other works of creation.

Our Lord Jesus became the Christ, the Anointed, when he received the anointing of the holy Spirit at his baptism. He was perfected as the Christ at his resurrection. He was a god (Mighty One) before he came into the world; he also was a god from the time he received the begetting of the holy Spirit at Jordan; and he is still a god, set down at the right hand of the Father. But he is not The God, he never was and never will be. Note again his own words after his resurrection, when speaking to Mary Magdalene: "I ascend to my Father and your Father; to my God and your God." (John 20:17) Hear what St. Paul says, "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by [or through] whom are all things." (1 Corinthians 8:6) Again, in referring to Jehovah, the Apostle calls him, "God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and again, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3, 17.

A COMMON, BUT UNSCRIPTURAL VIEW

The Lord Jesus is not the second person of a triune God. The word "triune" is unscriptural; so is the thought. St. Paul sets the matter straight in his words quoted above. He also declares that Jesus "thought not of robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation." No translation of this passage (Philippians 2:6), save in our Common Version gives the thought that Jesus considered himself equal to God the Father, but all are to the contrary of this. Our Common Version rendering is evidently a mistranslation. The entire argument of the Apostle shows that Christ humiliated himself, not that he claimed equality with Jehovah!

The word "trinity" is not found in the Bible. The only text in the Bible which seems in any way to suggest a trinity is acknowledged even by trinitarians themselves to be a forgery, incorporated into the text about the fifth century. This interpolation forms a part of 1 John 5:7, 8. We quote the passage, with the interpolated words enclosed in brackets: "For there are three that bear record [in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth,] the Spirit and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one." See Revised Version, Emphatic Diaglott, American Standard Union translation, Young's translation, etc. This passage is pronounced an interpolation by such eminent authorities as Sir Isaac Newton, Benson, Adam Clarke, Horne, Griesbach, Tischendorf and Alford.

We have explained in our writings that there was a time when our Lord Jesus did not exist, when Jehovah was alone. How else could the Bible declare that Jesus was the "beginning of the creation of God"? (Rev. 3:14) What is the value of language, anyway, if we do not give words their manifest meaning? Jesus undoubtedly had a beginning. This beginning was ages before he came to earth as a human being to die for Adam and his race. Those who denounce us should read our writings before criticizing them. Then they would not criticize at all, if honest; for they would know that there is no ground for criticism on the part of those who hold to the Bible as the Word of God.

THE LOGOS TRANSFERRED FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH

The Lord Jesus had a heavenly nature before he came into the world. He exchanged that nature, as we have stated, for an earthly one, in order that he might give his flesh, his humanity, a ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. Having accomplished this great work, he was granted by the Father an exaltation still higher than his previous glorious position and nature, even though his previous station had been second only to Jehovah himself. St. Paul declares of the position given Christ at his resurrection: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth [those now in the tomb, but yet to be raised to learn the truth as it is in Jesus]; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Philippians 2:9-11.

When on earth Jesus was not a sinful man in any sense. His birth of the Virgin Mary was miraculous. His holy life was transferred to human conditions. He was made a man—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and fit, therefore, to be the great Sin offering for Adam and all his posterity. He was simply the Man Jesus up to the time of his immersion in Jordan; but the anointing he there received constituted him the Anointed of God, the Christ, the Messiah.

MADE "PARTAKER OF THE DIVINE NATURE"

Jesus was a god, a Mighty One, higher than the angels, before he became a man. When born a babe, he was not a god at all, but a human being; and as the perfect man of thirty he was not a god. But when he received the anointing of the holy Spirit, of divine power, he became a Mighty One, because of this spirit-begetting. And since his resurrection he is a god, greater than ever before, "partaker of the divine nature"; for his church are called to this great exaltation, and they are called to the obtaining of the glory of their Lord, that they may be with him, as his bride, and be like him, members of his glorious body.—2 Thessalonians 2:14; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 21:2, 9; 22:17; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17; 12:12, 13, 27; 2 Peter 1:4.

Our Lord is the great Head of his church, and Head and body must partake of the same nature in glory. He gave up his human nature in death to purchase the human race. For parts of three days he lay dead in the tomb—not alive in any sense; for death is the absence of life. He had given up his human life never to take it up again. It was the purchase-price for the world. He was resurrected to the divine plane, an exaltation never before given to any creature of God. His bride is called to the same glorious nature as her Head, whose inheritance she is invited to share. Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of God.—Romans 6:4; 8:11; Acts 2:22, 24, 32, 33.

CONFUSION OF TRINITARIAN VIEW

Notice for a moment the great confusion from which we are saved by following the Bible's own testimony respecting our Lord Jesus and by throwing out the ridiculous nonsense of the dark ages. We are saved from thinking of our God as three beings with only one body or one being with three bodies. Trinitarians do not know which of these creedal statements to

take—some say one and some say the other. But both are wholly irrational; three are not one and one is not three. The oneness between the Father and the Son is explained by our Lord himself. He prayed that his disciples might become one in the same sense that he and the Father were one—surely not that his disciples might become one person, but that they might be one in spirit, in mind, in purpose, as were the Father and himself. See John 17:20-23. The followers of Jesus become one in mind and purpose by each giving up his own will to do God's will. And Jesus and the Father are one because Jesus surrendered his will to the Father's will, saying, "Not my will, but thine be done"; "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me"; "Lo, I come; I delight to do thy will, O my God!" These are the words of the Lord Jesus to the Father.

Touching the rise of the Trinitarian view, Abbott and Conant's Religious Dictionary, page 944, says "It was not until the beginning of the fourth century that the Trinitarian view began to be elaborated and formulated into a doctrine and an endeavor made to reconcile it with the belief of the church in ONE GOD." "Out of the attempt to solve this problem sprang the doctrine of the Trinity." Trinity "is a very marked feature in Hindooism, and is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese and the most ancient Grecian mythologies."

Like some other doctrines received by Protestants from Papacy, this one is accepted and fully endorsed, although its educated adherents are aware that not a text of Scripture can be adduced to its support. Yea, more; whoever will not affirm this unscriptural doctrine as his faith is declared by the articles of the Evangelical Alliance to be non-orthodox—a heretic. Hebrews 1:8 has been used by Trinitarians as a proof text that Jesus is Jehovah, and the fact is cited that the word God here is theos, the same as verse 9 which refers to the Father. They seem not to have noticed that the word god, 2 Corinthians 4:4, which refers to Satan, is also theos in the Greek. Theos is used of any mighty one, the same as Elohim in the Hebrew.

Philippians 2:8, 9 implies that our Lord's present glory is greater than the glory which he possessed before he became a man; otherwise it could not have been an exaltation. Now having the divine, immortal nature he cannot die. "Christ dieth no more." How straightforward and simple and reasonable is the Scriptural presentation compared with human traditions! In what a jumble of contradictions and confusion do they find themselves who say that Jesus and the Father are one God! This would involve the idea that our Lord Jesus acted the hypocrite when on earth and only pretended to address God in prayer, when he himself was the same God. Such should conclude, too, that since we read that God cannot be tempted of any, it was only a farce when Jesus was tempted of Satan. Again, the Father has always been immortal, hence could not die. How then, could Jesus have died? The Apostles are all false witnesses in declaring Jesus' death and resurrection if he did not die. The Scriptures declare, however, that he did die—"He poured out his soul [his being] unto death," not merely his body, as many assert.—Isaiah 53:12.

If they admit that Jesus really died, they take the other horn of the dilemma; for believing that their three Gods are all one person as many do, when Jesus died they must all three have died. If they all died, who raised them to life? How foolish all this sounds! Yet if Jesus and the Father are the same person, the same being, then when Jesus died the Father must have died. Shall we thus contradict the apostles and prophets and Jesus himself, and ignore reason and common sense, in order to hold to a dogma handed to us from the dark, superstitious past, by a corrupt apostate church? Nay! "To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURES RE THE HOLY SPIRIT

We next inquire, What say the Scriptures with regard to the holy Spirit? The nominal churches, Protestant and Catholic, affirm that the holy Spirit is a person, the third person of the Trinity. They claim that all this is "a great mystery." Yes, truly it is a mystery, such as is characteristic of the confusion of man-made creeds held by Babylon. But to those who turn to the Word of God and let it speak, all is clear and plain. We suggest that whatever definition of the term "holy Spirit" will meet all known conditions and harmonize all Scriptures bearing thereon may be understood to be the true meaning of the term. We will first give what we conceive to be such a definition, and then ask the reader to subject every Scripture where this term is used to this definition and see if it does not make harmony of all.

We understand the Bible to teach that the holy Spirit is the divine will, influence, power or disposition, exercised anywhere and for any purpose, at the divine pleasure. God exercises his Spirit or energy in a variety of ways, using various agencies, and accomplishing various results. Whatever God does through agencies is as truly his work as though he were the direct actor, since all his agencies are his creation—created by his own power; just as a contractor for building is said to build a house, though he may never have lifted a tool upon it. He does it with his materials and through his agents. Thus, when we read that Jehovah God created the heavens and the earth, we are not to suppose that he personally handled them. He used an agent. "He spake and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast." His holy power was exercised through his Only Begotten. God's Spirit was exercised in times past through the prophets. "They spake as they were moved by the holy Spirit" [power] of God. The masculine pronoun is often used in our Common Version Bible in referring to the holy Spirit of God, because God, who is a Spirit, is represented as masculine, as indicative of strength. The pronoun translated he when referring to the holy Spirit can with equal consistency be translated it, and is often so rendered. See Diaglott rendering of John 14:17, 26, as an example. For further elucidation of this subject of the holy Spirit, we refer the interested reader to our fifth volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Chapters 8-11, where we have treated the subject at length.

"One reads with father's specs upon his head,
And sees the thing just as his father did;
Another reads through Campbell or through Scott,
And thinks it means exactly what they thought.
Some read to prove a pre-adopted creed,
Thus understand but little what they read;
And every passage in the Book they bend
To make it suit that all-important end.
Some people read, as I have often thought,
To teach the Book, instead of to be taught."

MAKING FRIENDS OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."—Luke 16:9.

God's chosen heritage was the Jewish people. Under the Mosaic Covenant there were certain members of that nation who were representatives of God and of the people Israel. Therefore Jesus could say to his disciples, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Whatsoever, therefore, they bid you do, that observe and do; but do not after their works; for they say and do not." (Matthew 23:2, 3) God had committed to them these special responsibilities, blessings, privileges and knowledge, and the people were more or less dependent upon them; and they were unjust in their dealings with the people.

Through his Son, the Lord sent word to these Scribes and Pharisees that they were to be cast out of the stewardship. They had come to understand in a general way that a new dispensation was coming in—the Gospel age. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, had also proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Now Jesus gives a parable, which explains the reason for the course which these classes should take. He assumes the case of an unjust steward who was called upon by his lord to render up his accounts, because his stewardship was about to end.

When notified that his dismissal was at hand, this steward tried to make friends of all who were debtors to his master. No matter how unjust the steward had been with these debtors before, he now minimized their accounts, as he had a right to do. In olden times a steward had the right to make contracts, etc., for his master. So this steward cut down the accounts and made friends of the people. Commenting upon his course, our Lord said that this was a very wise procedure on the part of the steward, for thus he would be ingratiated into the favor of those who could help him. While our Lord commended this course as good worldly wisdom, he did not commend the steward's injustice, but his shrewdness in adopting a policy which would win the favor and friendship of those whom he had unjustly treated before.

Applied to his time, our Master's words would teach that the scribes and Pharisees should have sought to win the love and gratitude of their Jewish brethren. Had they tried to make the people happy and contented, it might have gone better with them afterward. But they did not do this; and when the great time of trouble came upon the nation, in the year 70 A. D.,

these religious rulers were among the chief mourners and sufferers in the trouble. They had not been as wise as the unjust steward.

OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AS GOD'S STEWARDS

Then our Lord applied the parable to his disciples, and gave them a lesson. "Likewise I say the same unto you." The application of the parable to His followers is somewhat different from its application to the scribes and Pharisees. "I say unto you: Make for yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." In other words, the Lord's people are here advised to use whatever of the unrighteous mammon they may have in doing as much good as possible, in blessing and assisting others; and thus they will make grateful, appreciative friends.

This does not mean that our good deeds and our use of whatever means the Lord has given us should be with a view to bringing commendation and material advantage to ourselves, but with a view to being of real service in blessing others along the lines laid down in the Scriptures. Thus the Lord's children make themselves truly worthy and pleasing to God. We believe this is a good plan to follow now. The Master declared that the children of this world are generally wiser than the children of light in recognizing what is for their best interests.

TIME OF TROUBLE PICTURED IN FRENCH REVOLUTION

The ecclesiastical powers of today are professedly sitting in the seat of Christ. The masses of the people know nothing better than what their religious rulers tell them. Now that these Doctors of the Law see the present dispensation coming to an end, they should seek to correct their former mistakes in dealing with their flocks, should seek to make some reparation for all their past delinquencies. They have been to a greater or less extent hiding "the key of knowledge" (Luke 11:52), to a greater or less extent imposing on the superstitions of the people, and taking the people's money under false pretenses. They should now seek to rectify all this so far as possible by telling the people the truth. They should try to save themselves from the violence of the fall which is coming to them. Were they to do so they would not fall so hard when the great disaster comes. But in antagonizing the interests of the people more and more they are adding to their own distress in the near future, as the Scriptures point out.

We should not be surprised if the priests and ministers will suffer more distress in the great trouble time nearing than will the people, because of their having hoodwinked the people. The Catholic priests suffered terribly at the time of the French Revolution, which was a picture on a small scale of the approaching great cataclysm. The French Revolution, we understand, is clearly referred to in Revelation 12:15, 16. See also STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 3, pp. 50-54, and pp. 64-69. We believe that the nominal church clergy and leaders will particularly suffer in the universal overthrow of the present order near at hand—some of them because they have actively opposed the truth; some because of posing as representatives of truth and enlightenment and the liberties of the people, and failing really to stand for the truth which they recognized—keeping quiet about it for policy's sake. They have failed to conserve the interests which they pretended to serve.

APPLICATION OF PARABLE TO THE SAINTS

In applying the words of Jesus to ourselves, they would seem to teach that to whatever extent we have the mammon of unrighteousness, worldly goods, we should be inclined to be liberal rather than penurious, according to the measure of our ability. We take it that the Lord is showing us here that we as his followers have more or less of means, opportunity, influence, etc., and that we should use these talents he has given us in forwarding his cause. And if in our presentations of truth a certain amount of denunciation may be met with, we should rather let the matter go unnoticed and seek to be generous, so far as is compatible with fairness to the Lord and the spirit of his Word.

The Master adds, "that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Those who could receive us into everlasting habitations would be only the Lord and his angels. He has promised to receive all his faithful ones. Our use of the unrighteous mammon, our sacrificing of earthly interests, which might in some cases bring us blessings from men, would surely at last bring us the crowning blessing from the Lord, as is promised. Our failing will be the reaching of the end of our sacrificial course. All of the Lord's people are to die—that is the purport of their consecration; it is a sacrifice even unto death. If they are of this class who make friends with, or of, or through, the mammon of unrighteousness, if they sacrifice these earthly things, then when they fail, when they die, when they have finished their course, they will be received into everlasting habitations—the place prepared for the faithful class of "more than conquerors," the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

We would not apply the word "they" necessarily to those of whom we made friends. God is our friend, if we as his children live a life of self-sacrifice and ignore the selfish use of earthly mammon in favor of the service of the Lord. Then our friends, those who will receive us when we fail, will be not those alone or those necessarily who may have been benefited by our sacrifices, but will be especially those beyond the veil—the Father, the Lord Jesus, the glorified saints, and all the holy angels. Blessed expectation!

TRESPASSES AND SINS AND THEIR EFFECT ON CHARACTER

"All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."—1 John 5:17.

We should recognize a distinction between trespasses and sins. A sin is that which is more or less wilfully and intentionally committed. A trespass is a sin in a certain sense, but one committed without intention. The fact that a sin is called a trespass would imply that it was not done wilfully. The divine law stands whether we are able to keep it or not; and every violation of the divine law is a sin in one sense. But those violations of God's law which are wholly the result of our unavoidable weaknesses are not culpable sins, and hence not in the same category with sins more or less wilful.

So far as the world is concerned, it is already under condemnation for sin. Those who have accepted Christ and have received the forgiveness of their sins through Him, are spoken of by the Apostle Paul as those whose sins " are past, through the forbearance of God." (Romans 3:25) Because of their consecration of their lives to be the followers of Christ these sins are forever gone, so far as responsibility for their transgressions is concerned. From this time on the Lord's people are counted no more as sinners, but as saints whose whole lives have been devoted to righteousness.

Nevertheless, we have this treasure of the new creature in earthen vessels, our mortal bodies. The new creature in Christ does not expect to practise sin any more; for if he should sin wilfully, this would mean his entire repudiation of the Covenant into which he has entered with the Lord. But notwithstanding this, he will commit trespasses; for he has merely the good intentions of the heart, with only an imperfect body in which to operate. The Apostles recognized this fact. St. Paul declared that in his flesh dwelt no perfection. St. John says that whosoever says that he has no sin deceives himself, and the truth is not in him. (1 John 1:8-10) This same Apostle, in the same Epistle, declares that whoever sins is of the devil. In this last text he evidently refers to the practise of sin, to wilful sin, not to unavoidable trespasses; for he has just said that all commit these unintentional violations of God's Law. St. James says that in many things we all offend. (James 3:2) To will is present with every consecrated child of God; but how to perform is the problem.

OUR ATTITUDE BECAUSE OF TRESPASSES

According to the Scriptures it is sinful for the Lord's people to injure one another in word, act or thought. But many do not realize this high standard, even after they have come into the family of God. They may not learn until months, or even years afterward, the full measure of the divine law respecting every affair in life. Therefore there are many who for a time are guilty of evil-speaking and evil-thinking, but who are unconscious of having done wrong. These transgressions of the divine law are trespasses. This should be our attitude toward God: "Gracious Heavenly Father, we cannot do perfectly. We pray thee, forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. We come with courage to thy throne of heavenly grace, asking for the covering of the merit of our Savior for these trespasses, and for grace to overcome as far as possible and to become holy in thought, in word, in deed."

But if any man sin, it is a different matter. In proportion as he wilfully violates the divine law, in that proportion he shall suffer stripes. Sins leave their mark on the character; for they are to some extent at least intentional violations of the principles of righteousness and of the covenant with God by which every real Christian obligates himself to obey the divine injunction. The Scriptures clearly indicate that if one of these deliberately sins, he commits the sin unto death, for which no penalty will be sufficient except the extinction of the second death.

TRESPASSES NOT NECESSARILY A HINDRANCE

The text, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous," evidently refers to trespasses and not to deliberate, or wilful sins; for, as we have already noted, the same Apostle writes, "He that sinneth is of the devil"; "that which is begotten of God sinneth not." Any one begotten of God, possessed of the holy Spirit, could not, so long as he is in possession of this holy Spirit, commit a sin with full intention. Except under the influence of strong temptation of the flesh, he could not sin knowingly; for if he were to commit such a sin, he would be manifesting that he had lost the holy Spirit entirely. So long as the holy Spirit abides in him he could not wilfully, intelligently, commit sin. He might be overcome by the weaknesses of the flesh, and thus might give a measure of consent to the wrong; but this would be only a partial sin. Yet for that portion which would involve the consent of his mind he would receive stripes, in proportion to the degree of wilfulness connected with the matter.

Our unintentional trespasses, properly striven against, evidently, do not interfere with the development of character. The implication of the Scriptures is that the new creature who is properly growing is striving against all kinds of sin and imperfection and is waging a good warfare. In the case of trespasses which are unavoidable on his part, instead of doing him an injury, these serve to show him what points in his character are weak and need to be strengthened. He learns of his weaknesses only by more or less falling into trespasses unintentionally, unwillingly. As he finds weaknesses in his character-development, it becomes his pleasure and earnest effort to fortify himself along these lines, that he may become "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."—Ephesians 6:10.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our Lord declared that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men except the blasphemy against the holy Spirit. His thought here, we believe, is that because men are more or less imperfect in their judgment, on that account the Lord would be willing to forgive all such blemishes and trespasses; for they are unintentional. Hence there would be divine forgiveness for some of the great trespasses and transgressions which they have committed. The crucifixion of our Lord was not really intentional. Speaking of those who crucified Christ the Apostle Peter says, "I wot, brethren, that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul expresses the same thought, saying, "For had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory."—Acts 3:17; 1 Corinthians 2:8.

These statements imply that this act was more or less of a trespass on the part of the perpetrators. There was a measure of sin, a measure of knowledge. In proportion as they had knowledge they had responsibility, and proportionately received stripes, nationally and individually. Therefore the Scriptures tell us that there will be future opportunities of blessing to those who crucified the Prince of Life. Their eyes will be opened when they awake. We are glad of this. They did not sin with full knowledge and wilfulness, and are not, therefore, subjects of the second death. They will have a future trial. But we understand they will come up merely as members of the race of Adam. They will have no special favor as Jews, and may require, indeed, many stripes. Some may never be recovered.

What is it to sin against the holy Spirit? We reply that the holy Spirit is the spirit of the truth, of righteousness. Whoever recognizes the spirit of the truth, the Lord's Spirit, and intentionally does violence to it and to the messengers of that truth, because they are its messengers, is sinning against the holy Spirit; and to whatever extent one does this he is a wilful sinner. If his act be committed with full knowledge, full light, there would never be forgiveness for the sin, either in this life or in the life to come. And the end of that sin against full light and understanding would be the second death. While every intentional sin against the holy Spirit, against the truth, must have a punishment, whether in this age or in the incoming age, yet the punishment will not be the second death unless the knowledge, the sin, be a full, complete one.

ELIJAH'S RETURN AND VICTORY

SEPTEMBER 5.—1 KINGS 18:16-40.

ELIJAH'S EXPERIENCES TYPICAL—KING AHAB AND QUEEN JEZEBEL ALSO TYPES—THREE AND A HALF YEARS' DROUGHT PREFIGURED TWELVE HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS OF SPIRITUAL DROUGHT—ELIJAH'S PRAYER OF FAITH BROUGHT NATURAL SHOWERS —CHURCH'S PRAYERS OF FAITH BROUGHT SPIRITUAL SHOWERS AND A GREAT REFORMATION.

Our lesson is interesting as we find it simply recorded in the Bible, but the interest of Bible students increases from the time they learn that Elijah was not only a Prophet of the Lord, but also a type of the church's earthly experiences. The Book of Revelation (2:20-25; 18:7) pictures to us Queen Jezebel as representing a great religious system of this Gospel age which did great violence to the truth. Ahab represented the worldly governments. His wife represented a false Christian church system married to earthly governments. As Ahab represented the worldly governments claiming to be Christ's kingdoms, so Queen Jezebel pictured, or typified, a false church system, which, instead of maintaining its purity as the virgin church of Christ, became married or united to these earthly systems. Contrary to this, the true virgin church of Christ was to remain faithful to her heavenly Lord, awaiting his second coming; and her marriage to Him was then to be accomplished.

As the Prophets of Baal were under the care of Queen Jezebel and under the patronage of King Ahab, so the priests and the religious representatives of a great church system have been the obedient servants of the great false institutions pictured by Ahab and Jezebel. Similarly, Elijah the Prophet and his dealings with Ahab, Jezebel and the affairs of Israel, was a type of the true church of Christ in the flesh—this side the veil. Although the true church is indeed represented symbolically by a woman, it is also represented sometimes by a man, when the picture includes the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church.

In Revelation we have the three and a half years of Elijah's experience stated in symbolic language—forty-two months—1,260 days—three and a half times or years. (Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5) In Revelation the time was symbolic, so that each day of the three and a half years represented a year, or the whole period 1,260 years. Some Bible scholars have applied this period as beginning in 539 A.D. and ending in 1798 A.D., at the time when Napoleon Bonaparte took the Pope of Rome prisoner to Paris.

As during Elijah's hiding in the wilderness there was no rain until he came forth, as told in today's lesson, so in the church's experiences there was a lack of rain, a drouth spiritually, for twelve hundred and sixty years, ending in 1798.

As just before the time of drought in Israel ended, there was a great contest (related in to-day's lesson), with the victory on the side of the Lord, so in the history of the church a great contest took place between Catholicism and Protestantism in the period styled the Reformation. In the Revelation picture the church, symbolized by a woman, is seen driven into the wilderness—lost to the general view. The woman corresponds in the type to Elijah hidden from view to the king, the queen and the prophets of Baal—in the world, but not of it. As Elijah was fed in the wilderness by the ravens, so the account in Revelation says that the woman, the true church, secluded from general view, was, nevertheless, spiritually fed during the twelve hundred and sixty years in which the famine for spiritual food prevailed in the world.

The Elijah class did a very courageous work after emerging from the wilderness condition. Spiritual refreshment came in abundant measure. For a time it looked as though Queen Jezebel had been vanquished, and that the slaying of her prophets with the sword of truth had demonstrated their errors and put the truth of God and its servant, Elijah, the true church, into a commanding position. However, this was not for long. Our next lesson will show us the Elijah class again fleeing from Jezebel's power.

Many express surprise that in response to earnest Bible study the Word of God in our day is telling such a beautiful message of divine wisdom, justice, love and power—a message very contrary to the teachings of the past. "How," they ask, "is it possible for Bible students of today to have so much more light on God's Word than was found by equally zealous Bible students of the past?"

We reply that the twelve hundred and sixty years of spiritual drought are the explanation. About the year 300 A.D., Christian bishops began to claim Apostolic powers and to style themselves Apostolic Bishops. The claim is still made that the bishops of the church of Rome, of the church of England, etc., are of equal authority with the twelve apostles, while the Bible claims to the contrary—that the twelve apostles selected by Jesus (St. Paul taking the place of Judas) were to be the only foundations of the Christian church, their teachings being on a full parallel with those of the Lord Jesus—they being his special mouthpieces to the church, orally and through their epistles. Jesus prophesied the falling away which would result in

some falsely claiming to be Apostles. See Rev. 2:2. Compare 2 Pet. 2:1; Acts 20:30.

This exaltation of the bishops came in gradually and was given great force by the action of Emperor Constantine in calling for a church Council at Nice, Bithynia, 325 A.D. The Council, under the Emperor's guidance, produced the Nicene Creed as representing the faith of the people of God. Subsequently that creed was impressed upon the people as being the only proper and infallible faith. Similarly, other additions to the creed were made later on by the bishops. The indorsement of these creeds implied that the bishops who made them had the right, the authority, the divine revelation necessary for the work; and the people gradually endorsing the creeds were really endorsing at the same time the doctrine of apostolic succession, which was subsequently made a feature of the creeds.

From the time the Nicene creed was promulgated and accepted, 325 A.D., there was practically no more Bible study for over twelve centuries. During all that time Bible study was considered unnecessary, because the apostolic bishops had formulated the creeds as proper statements of the church's faith. To study the Bible would have meant the studying of how to fight against the Emperor and the combined views and teachings of the bishops. Besides, Bibles, then written on parchment, were worth a fortune and possessed by few; and education necessary for reading was extremely limited.

REVIVAL OF BIBLE STUDY

Twelve hundred years after the first expression by the so-called apostolic bishops brings us to 1526, when the art of printing had become common. In that year Prof. Tyndale, having prepared his MS., published it in Germany, because of the opposition of the English clergy. He imported his New Testaments into London, in whose shops the people began to purchase them. Few were able to read; but many were glad to organize classes and to hire a reader, that they might know the Word of God. At this same time the Germans were learning something of the New Testament and its different teachings, from Luther and his associates.

The church of England bishops had heard about this New Testament. They forthwith bought up the entire edition in the shops, and publicly burnt them in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. They feared that the people would become interested in the words of Jesus and the divinely-inspired twelve apostles; and that they, who had taken to themselves the title of "apostolic bishop," would become mere ciphers. They knew, too, that the eighteen Ecumenical Councils held during those twelve hundred years had declared to be true Christian faith many things not taught in the Bible, and that they had omitted many things that are taught therein. They feared that the people, becoming Bible students, would know of these things, and thus would be upset the general belief based in the creeds—and not in the Bible.

We see, however, that their fears were almost groundless. The teachings of the creeds, impressed for twelve centuries, have so fastened themselves upon the minds of the people that they can read to the contrary in the Bible and never notice the discrepancy! However, a great Bible-study inclination came at that time to the British people. Several other translations were subsequently brought out, until finally the bishops considered it advisable to give the Bible to the people, impressing upon them the thought that the bishops had all along been upholding the Bible. Then, too, they warned the people against putting any construction upon the Bible that would make it different from the teaching of the so-called "apostolic bishops" in the creeds—threatening them with eternal torment.

Interest in the Bible continuing, King James thought to popularize himself by authorizing a committee to prepare the so-called King James Version. While it was in preparation, the Roman Catholics, not to be outdone, produced a version entitled the Douay Bible—still in vogue. This was given to the people, with the suggestion that it was in harmony with the creeds, and that any one interpreting it differently would be a heretic who could not be stopped even in purgatory, but would pass straight on to eternal torture.

As it was, Tyndale and some of the others interested in the Bible suffered martyrdom, as enemies of the "apostolic bishops," and their creeds and institutions. The conflict proceeded, as already suggested, until 1799, when the Bible came into great prominence, nearly all of our great Bible Societies of today having been organized within fifteen years after that date. The foretold period of spiritual drought having been ended, a great spiritual shower came to the world. Nevertheless, as our next lesson will show, Ahab, and especially Jezebel, were unchanged. Elijah's life being again in danger, he fled to the wilderness.

PILGRIMS ALL, IN SOLEMN HASTE

"Silent, like men in solemn haste,
Girded wayfarers of the waste,
We pass out at the world's wide gate,
Turning our back on all its state;
We press along the narrow road
That leads to life, to bliss, to God.

"We cannot and we would not stay;
We dread the snares that throng the way;
We fling aside the weight and sin,
Resolved the victory to win;
We know the peril, but our eyes
Rest on the splendor of the prize.

"'Tis but a little and we come
To our reward, our crown, our home!
Another year, or more, or less,
And we have crossed the wilderness;
Finished the toil, the rest begun,
The battle fought, the triumph won!

"We grudge not, then, the toil, the way;
Its ending is the endless day!
We shrink not from these tempests keen,
With little of the calm between;
We welcome each descending sun;
Ere morn our joy may be begun!"

ELIJAH'S FLIGHT AND VISION

SEPTEMBER 12.—1 KINGS 19:8-18.

JEZEBEL UNREPENTANT—AHAB UPHOLDS HER—ELIJAH'S LIFE THREATENED—HE FLEES, DISCOURAGED—GOD GRANTED HIM A VISION OF THE FUTURE—THE WIND, THE EARTHQUAKE, THE FIRE, THE STILL, SMALL VOICE—WHAT THESE THINGS SIGNIFY NOW TO THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH CLASS.

Elijah expected that, after three and a half years of divine chastisement, followed by a special manifestation of divine power against the representatives of Baal, the true God and the true religion would have a measure of prosperity with the people. He was surprised to find Queen Jezebel bitter and murderous as ever and King Ahab fully dominated by her influence. He fled, sadly discouraged. After a long sleep, relieving his nervous strain, the Lord gave him, through an angel, a special message of comfort and food which lasted forty days, until he came to the Mount of God.—Horeb.

There Elijah went through a series of experiences (whether literal or in vision we may not be too certain), in which the Lord was to reveal himself. First came the winds, rending the rocks; but God was not in the winds. Next came the earthquake, with destructive force; but God was not in the earthquake. Then followed the devouring fire, but God was not in the fire. Finally came the still, small voice, which Luther's translation renders, "The voice of Eden." God was in the voice—it really and truly represented Him. This narrative multiplies in its force to Bible students when they realize that all these things which occurred to Elijah foreshadowed experiences with which the church of Christ in the flesh is intimately connected.

Jezebel still represents a form of godliness great and boastful, and supported by earthly power, represented in King Ahab. The picture intimates to us that the great social and religious upheaval of a century ago did not deeply affect or greatly alter the outward attitude of the church nominal and the world toward the true church of Christ in the flesh, represented by the Prophet Elijah. The reformation was partial only. Great institutions still upheld many of the serious errors of the past. The Elijah class again passed out of public view, though not out of communion and fellowship with God, divine supervision providing for their necessities of rest and spiritual refreshment.

Mount Horeb, otherwise called the "Mount of God," fitly represented in the picture Messiah's kingdom. The coming of Elijah to it portrayed the fact that the church will be in and under the kingdom administration while still in the flesh,

although the last members of the church will not fully participate in the kingdom honors and blessings until they shall have experienced the great resurrection "change" noted by St. Paul in the words, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."—1 Corinthians 15:50-52.

WHAT THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH SEES

Many Bible students understand that chronologically Messiah's kingdom began its operation in the world in the year 1878, while the last members of the Elijah class are still in the flesh. How soon the entire company of the Elijah class will pass beyond the veil and the kingdom be ushered in with power and great glory is not definitely stated in the Bible.

While in this condition Bible students the world over have been receiving of the Lord a special vision of the future. That is to say, through Bible study they have been learning that Messiah's kingdom is to be inaugurated in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation—no, nor ever shall be afterward. (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21) They have learned that the winds of strife, the present war, have been held back for years by divine power, during the time when God's people have been assisted in Bible study, symbolically spoken of as the sealing of the saints in their foreheads. Revelation 7:1-4. These see the four parts of the great divine program which will usher in the kingdom of God, for which so long God's saints have prayed, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as in heaven." They see that the winds represent the war; that the earthquake of Elijah's vision represents a great social revolution, which will follow the great war, lapping upon it, perhaps. They see that, following the revolution, anarchy is to be expected, symbolized by fire, consuming, destroying, the present order of things—symbolically represented by St. Peter as consuming the ecclesiastical heavens and the social, financial and political earth, giving place to the new heavens, Messiah's kingdom, and the new earth, society upon a new basis approved by the kingdom.—2 Peter 3:10-13.

In none of these great experiences coming to the world will God be manifest. They will all be merely preparatory, terrible experiences, to fit and prepare man for the voice of Eden, which will subsequently be heard, bringing the message which will be "the desire of all nations." The same voice of Eden is mentioned by the Lord through Zephaniah the Prophet, saying that first the fire of God's jealousy will consume the present order of things; and that then, following the fire, God will "turn to the people a pure message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."—Zephaniah 3:8, 9.

FULFILMENT OF THE VISION BEGUN

Bible students understand that these four great features of God's plan portrayed to Elijah have already begun a fulfilment—that the present European war is the letting loose of "the four winds of heaven"—winds of strife. It is unnecessary to say that no such war has ever before been. Official reports show that more than twelve millions of men have already been either killed, wounded or captured, in the army. The world has been getting ready for this war for forty years and wondering why it did not come sooner. The newspapers have been declaring year after year that it would surely come before Fall or before Spring. Now we see why it has been held off—that the angels were commanded of the Lord not to loose the winds until the servants of God should be "sealed in their foreheads."

This intellectual appreciation of God's plan our Lord clearly foretold, saying to his people now living, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice; for your deliverance draweth nigh." Bible students see these things beginning in the present war. They know what to expect in the near future. The fact that Elijah saw these things before he was taken up in the chariot of fire should not be understood to mean that all these experiences will be past before the church will be translated, "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," but rather that all these things were shown to Elijah on the Mount of God as identified with the inauguration of the kingdom. Then he had other experiences before he left.

Some are inquiring why God permits such a great war. The Bible answer is that this war and all the other death experiences of our race are parts of a great divine lesson on the exceeding sinfulness of sin. There is no war in heaven—no sickness, no death, no sorrow, no pain, no insane asylums, no sanitariums, no doctors—because there is no sin there. But we have all these terrible conditions on earth because sin entered the world, as the Bible tells us, six thousand years ago, and because death is the penalty for sin—not eternal torment, as we were once taught. "The wages of sin is death"; "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4) The resurrection of the dead is the hope of the world, and is built upon the great sacrifice which Jesus gave when he died for our sins.

THE ANTITYPICAL ELIJAH ENCOURAGED

St. Paul, as well as Jesus, tells us about our day. He not only describes it as a day of symbolical fire, but he also assures us that all who are truly the Lord's people will be granted an opening of the eyes of their understanding to appreciate where we are. "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He tells us that all who build their faith and character with the gold, silver and precious stones of divine truth will pass through the fiery ordeal of this time safe—"kept by the power of God." Others who have built their faith and hope with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition will suffer loss, though themselves may be saved by the fire. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) He tells us that that day shall come upon all the world as a thief and as a snare. "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of the light and children of the day." Let us, therefore, walk in the light, as children of the light.—1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

As Elijah was discouraged until the Lord gave him the vision showing how he ultimately would be revealed through the winds, the earthquake, the fire and the still, small voice, so it has been with the church. There was a time during which much discouragement was felt, until the Lord began to make clear the divine plan by which Messiah's kingdom would be inaugurated. Seeing this plan, the Bible students are now lifting up their heads and rejoicing, as Jesus instructed, knowing that their deliverance will be inaugurated through the great time of trouble, of which they see only the beginning.

INTERESTING LETTERS

WATCH TOWER REFERENCES RE TABERNACLE SHADOWS

[FROM 1907 TO 1915]

MY DEAR PASTOR AND BROTHER:—

Excuse me for taking a few moments of your valuable time. I write this message thinking perhaps it may be a means of assistance and blessing to some of the Lord's flock.

In studying the TABERNACLE SHADOWS, certain questions often come up which might receive a more satisfactory answer. Few of the friends, however, have the time to look up past references in THE WATCH TOWER. Quite a while ago I made a list of every reference I could find in the TOWERS from 1907 to 1914, relating to the TABERNACLE, and when we went over the TABERNACLE in class I found the added references exceedingly helpful and satisfying. I thought I might pass the blessing along to others. Hence I enclose a list of them, and you may do with them as you see fit. Our Bible Helps give references up to 1907, and these take up from that year to 1914 and also some Convention Reports.

God bless you, dear Brother, in all your labors of love, now and hereafter. You are constantly in my prayers. I love you and your work dearly.

Yours in the One Hope, DAVID DAVIDIAN.—Calif.

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APPLICATION OF THE RANSOM

Following references are helpful studied in connection with chapter IV., **Tabernacle Shadows**—"The Great Day of Atonement:"

World is not yet Bought	Year	1912	Page 107
Ransom Points to be Remembered	"	1909	" 349
Deliverance from the Curse	"	1911	" 187
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What the Church Sacrifices	"	1911	" 390

WHEN THEIR HAPPY LIFE BEGAN

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—

May the love of God be with thee! It has long been my desire to tell you my appreciation in my feeble way. Three years ago I had the pleasure to listen to a workman in the Standard Oil Yard, Pt. Richmond, Cal. When I heard him I was amazed and coming home that night I told my wife that I had heard a man talk as none else before in my life, although I used to seek around for the truth, but had failed to find that which I could love. My wife asked me to bring that man (Brother Starr) home, so I brought him home one night and I got some of my friends over to hear him. Thanks be to God for that night, for there began our happy life! Our home before that time was not very happy; but since then it has certainly changed. We are now consecrated to the Lord, and one of our friends, a sister, has done the same. Happiness untold in both homes is now to be found.

The Lord has been feeding us from his storehouse, and each time when we read THE WATCH TOWER, and see the letters from the friends, I simply must pray for each one of them! It has been hard for me to learn certain lessons. I have prayed for patience and would forget time and time again. I am a hard workman and my associates are very impatient. So in a recent WATCH TOWER you told us to pray for love to be cultivated in us, and in the evening report to our heavenly Father. Since then I have had great blessings along the line of patience. Both my wife and I love the brethren, for among them we spend all the time we can, thanking the heavenly Father for his loving kindness to us. My wife is doing colporteur work as much as her strength permits, and we have both had great blessings therefrom. The six volumes have brought us untold happiness. Daily we pray the Lord to give you strength. We love you and ask you to include us in your petitions to the Lord that we may be among that little flock.

BROTHER AND SISTER CHRISTIAN LARSEN.—Cal.

VOL. XXXVI BROOKLYN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1915 No. 17

CHRISTIAN DUTY AND THE WAR

As the war progresses a bitter, partisan spirit spreads. The people of each of the warring nations are convinced that right is on their side, and that everything to the contrary is wrong. The sense of justice seems more and more to go blind. Any attempt to consider matters justly, equitably, is resented as disloyalty, stupidity, etc. The best elements of the natural man seem to be paralyzing under the influence of the war. Germany and her allies claim that they have maintained the world's peace for thirty years, during all of which time their jealous neighbors, noting their prosperity, have sought to hinder it and have awaited only a favorable moment for attempting their destruction. To them their commercial progress and attempt to build a navy proportionate to their population have aroused the jealousy of their neighbors already entrenched commercially on the sea.

They claim that Belgium was not neutral, but conniving with their enemies, and that, any way, the passing of German armies through Belgium was a military necessity. Similarly they claim that the protection of their national life against the European combination makes necessary their submarine warfare and blockade and other things which they do not prefer. They claim, too, that necessity knows no law, that this is the hour of their necessity, and that the object of war is success—to be obtained as honorably as possible, but to be obtained.

Britain and her allies take the contrary view. They declare that for forty years they have noted the progress of the Germans and considered it a menace to their rights. Accordingly, the French maintained an army of equal size with Germany; Russia, an army of double the size; while Great Britain has striven to have a navy stronger than that of all the remaining nations of the world. If Germany be not crushed now, her spirit of progress will ultimately put her at the head of the nations, commercially and financially. This would mean that all the other nations would be less powerful proportionately. They see in this a terrible nightmare of militarism. Germany must be crushed at any cost, not only for the sake of the present, but also for the sake of future generations.

The Bible declares, "God is not in all their thoughts." (Psalm 10:4) Although all the nations of the Continent, except the Turks, style themselves Christian nations, not one of them manifests any faith in God. They all feel that the entire responsibility, both for the present and for the future, rests altogether upon themselves.

"FEAR HATH SURPRISED THE HYPOCRITES"

Convinced of having a divine commission and with sundry forms of godliness, but without any of its power or faith, many of these nations are only now awakening to the fact that this war is not like other wars—that God has let loose the winds, is no longer restraining them. The time has come for him to allow the angry passions of men to bring the whirlwind of trouble, which shortly will lead on to revolution and then to anarchy, and will thus prepare the way of the Lord and his kingdom.

What a sad spectacle the war presents—twenty millions of soldiers engaged, at a cost of over forty million dollars per day for their maintenance! Twelve millions of men in the prime of life have already been wounded, captured or killed. The consumption of ammunition is astounding. One of the British ministers recently declared that in one battle in Belgium the British forces used more ammunition than in the entire Boer war!

National debts were already enormous, and British consols (bonds) were selling at twenty-five per cent. less than their face value before this war began. Can any rational person suppose that the debts of the warring nations represented by their bonds will ever be paid? And when the people shall realize the meaning of all this and of the crash of financial institutions which this will involve, the discovery will be terrible. The only logical result to be expected of the discouraged people will be as the Bible predicts—so great an earthquake as was not since man was on the earth—social earthquake, revolution, gigantic in its character.—Rev. 16:18.

WAR'S DEMORALIZING INFLUENCE

Professed ministers of Christ of various denominations seem to be vying with each other in leaving the Great Captain of our Salvation and his standard of peace and love in order to associate themselves more and more with militarism. Appealed to by the representatives of the Government, these professed representatives of the Prince of Peace are making themselves popular with their governments by preaching war. We hear only a little from Great Britain along these lines, but the suggestion from the Bishop of London is quite sufficient on this point. His suggestion urges boys and girls to marry early and to raise large families, presumably for mortal combat—not to be soldiers of the Cross of Christ and followers of the Lamb, but soldiers of the Cross of St. George which marks the British flag.

Recently in Canada the Editor was astounded by the activity of the preachers there—especially those of the Church of England. One was out in Khaki uniform marching through the streets with the volunteers. Asked by a college friend, "Did I see you in the ranks?" he answered, "Yes, I wanted to encourage the boys." "And did you think of going to the front, to the trenches?" "Not a bit of it!" He was merely acting as a decoy to get others to the front; just as a bull they have at one of the Chicago stockyards which meets the

animals about to be slaughtered and, tossing his head in the air, becomes their leader up the gangway leading to the slaughter. There he knows his little niche, into which he glides and is sheltered; while the others drive and press one another forward to the slaughter. But it is in the pulpit that the minister has his opportunity to address the mothers—"Why not have your boy go to the front?"

MINISTERS AS RECRUITING AGENTS

To give the matter a religious coloring, some of these ministers have taken texts from the Bible, which certainly have no application whatever to the subject in hand. The text of one in preaching about the valor of the Canadians who lost their lives in war was, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth." (Revelation 14:13) The text of another, intended to encourage enlistment, etc., was, "These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."—Rev. 14:4.

What a terrible perversion! And for what a purpose! To inflame the passions of humanity, to deceive people, to get them to do the very thing which Christ has directed shall not be done. Such ministers may gain favor and influence with their earthly king and his ministers and representatives in the government, but how will they stand with the other King, whose empire is to be inaugurated with the great Battle of Armageddon, to which this present war is leading? We tremble to think of their responsibility, if they know what they are doing.

It is quite possible that they do not realize the true situation. Ninety-five per cent., probably, of all the educated ministers in all the great cities have confessed for years that they do not believe the Bible. Indirectly they have admitted that they merely use it as a book from which to select texts because the common people have a sort of superstitious respect for it. They have gotten so in the habit of selecting texts without any reference to the contexts—so in the habit of deceiving themselves and their trusting flocks—that they probably do not realize what they are doing and how they are misrepresenting the Word of God. We know that the Lord's judgment in all cases will be just; we defer to it.

The ministers of Toronto, to show their patriotism and their confidence that the war is of God, that all the holy angels are applauding the recruits and that they will all go to heaven at death, etc., etc., we suppose, have raised a purse of money for the purchase of a Gatling gun, to be carried across the seas and used to kill German Christians—in whose Christianity they have no confidence and evidently believe that God has none. The viewpoint of Bible students is that the fact that both British and Germans claim ninety-five per cent. of their population to be Christians is no proof that they are such really. Hence the Toronto preachers, in purchasing the Gatling gun to kill Christians, are quite right, probably, in supposing that they will not be killing real Christians, just as Bible students feel doubts that all Toronto ministers are Christians, in the true sense of the word.

THE CHRISTIAN'S PROPER ATTITUDE

Meanwhile, where do the true followers of Christ stand, and what is their duty? Bible students more and more are awakening to a realization of what the present war is, and are conscientiously inquiring respecting their own responsibility. Some have inquired in respect to the situation in connection with the manufacture of war ammunition. Our advice to them has been to avoid engaging in such work as this, except as the money would be absolutely necessary to provide food and shelter for their families and themselves. And then, taking such a situation merely as a matter of necessity, we recommend that it be vacated as speedily as something else can be found, no matter how poor the pay, if it will provide life's necessities.

We are not unaware that this is a far-reaching subject, and that many would class us as narrow in the giving of such advice. Some would tell us that we carry this matter to an extreme; that on the same principle an employee of a railroad or steamboat should avoid loading such war munitions, the bill-clerk object to his part of the matter, the stenographer to his, etc. We would say that so far as reasonably possible we should avoid having anything to do with these implements of destruction, but if compelled from necessity, should hold our situation only until one for a better cause could be obtained.

In SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. VI., we have set forth a suggestion that the followers of Christ seek by every proper means to avoid participation in war. We there suggested the possibility, but that in the event of conscription the Lord's followers should use all their influence toward obtaining positions in the Hospital Corps or in the Provision Department of the army, rather than in the actual warfare. We suggested further that if it were impossible to avoid going into the trenches, it would still not be necessary to violate the divine requirement, "Thou shalt do no murder."

We have been wondering since if the course we have suggested is the best one. We wonder if such a course would not mean compromise. We reflect that to become a member of the army and to put on the military uniform implies the duties and obligations of a soldier as recognized and accepted. A protest made to an officer would be insignificant—the public in general would not know of it. Would not the Christian be really out of his place under such conditions?

"But," some one replies, "If one were to refuse the uniform and the military service he would be shot."

We reply that if the presentation were properly made there might be some kind of exoneration; but if not, would it be any worse to be shot because of loyalty to the Prince of Peace and refusal to disobey his order than to be shot while under the banner of these earthly kings and apparently giving them support and, in appearance at least, compromising the teachings of our heavenly King? Of the two deaths we would prefer the former—prefer to die because of faithfulness to our heavenly King. Certainly the one dying for his loyalty to the principles of the Lord's teachings would accomplish far more by his death than would the one dying in the trenches. We cannot tell how great the influence would be for peace, for righteousness, for God, if a few hundred of the Lord's faithful were to follow the course of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and refuse to bow down to the god of war. Like those noble men they might say, "Our God is able to deliver us, if he chooses so to do; but if he does not choose to deliver us, that will not alter our course. We will serve him and follow his direction, come what may."

Those Hebrews of the past cast into the fiery furnace because of their faithfulness to God, but afterwards delivered, are a noble example. Indeed, the millions of soldiers enduring terrible privations through loyalty to earthly kings during the present great war are wonderful examples and illustrations. May not the soldiers of Christ well say to themselves, "If the ancient worthies knew God only partially, yet were so faithful to Him, and if these earthly soldiers are so faithful to earthly kings, what manner of persons ought we to be who have come into the family of God by the Spirit of begetting, who have entered the school of Christ, who are being guided and led by the Captain of our Salvation, and who have his exceeding great and precious promises in respect to our eternal future! How should we stand for him and for his teachings? Could we lay down our lives in a better way than by faithfulness to the King of kings and Lord of lords, our Redeemer and Head?"

We are not urging this course. We are merely suggesting it. The responsibility fully belongs with each individual. We are discharging our responsibility toward many Bible students who are inquiring of us respecting the mind of the Lord on this subject. We gave them our best thoughts previously, but now fear that we were too conservative. We always advocate conservatism, in the sense of not rushing into difficulties simply because they are difficulties and would mean trouble. But we do advocate that, while seeking to avoid trouble and to live peaceably with all men, where duty calls, or danger, we should not be wanting there.

THE ULTIMATE DESIGN OF THE LAW OF GOD

"The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience and an undissembled faith."—1 Timothy 1:5.

We have in the above text the summing up of the divine law in the word "commandment." As a matter of fact, there are various commandments, all of which were in a general way represented in the Decalogue. Our Lord divided these commandments into two parts, declaring that these two parts were a synoptical statement of the entire law of God. A law is a commandment, imposed by rightful authority—a rule of conduct which we are bound to obey. The children of Israel did not appreciate the commandments given in the Law. To them it consisted of merely so many statements of what they should do and what they should not do—no more. They did not get the proper scope of the matter. Even the Christian church has largely failed to get a comprehensive view of the divine law.

We are not to think of the law as imperfect, for God, being perfect, could not give an imperfect law. God's law, or commandment, then, is perfect. Speaking of the law the Apostle Paul writes, "The law is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just and good." (Romans 7:12) The reason why the Israelites could not keep the law was not that the law was imperfect, but that they were sold under sin, as the Apostle declares. (V. 14) We recognize the law as being the standard of perfection. Our Lord, when he came, "magnified the law and made it honorable." He showed how grand and far-reaching the law is when fully comprehended.

It is impossible for any of the fallen race to live up to the requirements of God's perfect law, because of the imperfections and weaknesses of the flesh. In the case of the church, this impossibility is removed by Christ. "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us," because God has made this arrangement for us, that the merit of Christ shall cover our imperfections and shortcomings. This enables us to live in full harmony with this law; for we can keep it in spirit, though not fully in letter, and the blood of Jesus makes up for all the rest—our unwilling imperfections.

PURE, UNSELFISH LOVE

The Apostle speaks here of "the end of the commandment." The expression seems somewhat obscure. The thought seems to be this: the ultimate purpose of the law, that which it is designed to produce, is love—to bring us to the place where we shall be in full harmony with the one who made the law, and who is himself the embodiment of love. This will be the final result of God's law to all who receive it. He wishes that those who are perfect shall remain perfect, and that those who are imperfect shall see the proper standard for all Jehovah's creatures to be a just standard, a loving standard; that God is to be obeyed, not from compulsion, but from love for him and for the principles of righteousness. It is his ultimate purpose that all his intelligent creatures who will be granted eternal life must be perfect, in full harmony with their Creator.

The Apostle proceeds to point out that this love required by God's law must be of a certain quality. We can understand the love of a parent for a child, the love of a person for an animal—quite proper if not carried to an extreme. There might be more or less selfishness in such love. A person might love a dog because it was his dog, or love his child because it was his child. This love, therefore, would have a selfish feature and would not be the disinterested kind, the benevolent kind, not the highest form of love. The love that would fulfil all the requirements of God's law would be "love out of a pure heart."

Love can be entertained in a heart not altogether pure. There can be a mixture of love and selfishness, and this is very generally the case with fallen humanity. Even as Christians our love may be only partly pure at first, but gradually the spirit of the commandment, received into our heart, should purge out the selfishness. Godlike love would mean love for God's truth, love for his holy law, love for his creatures. It is an unselfish love, as is the love of God. God has nothing to gain by all he is doing for the church or purposes to do for the world. He does it out of a pure heart, out of a good, benevolent, loving heart—not to see what he can get out of it.

A pure heart is one which has no selfishness in its motives; it has a desire to do good to all, to do evil to none, to see others blessed as well as itself; to love and serve God perfectly, with all its powers. Our Lord commended this condition of heart, saying, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." It is very evident, then, that such a pure-hearted person is not merely one who starts out in the Christian life with a good intention. All who start in the Christian life do so with a good intention; but they must be instructed and educated. They must develop to perfection this purity of heart. Hence the experiences of the Christian are for the very purpose of bringing his heart into this condition of pure, unselfish love.

At the beginning of the Christian way our hearts are pure in the sense of being sincere, truthful. We mean what we say, what we profess. We are not merely drawing near to God with our lips and not with our hearts. But love out of a pure heart, this purity of love referred to in our text, is attained by the putting off more and more of the things of selfishness and the putting on more fully of the Lord's Spirit. The Apostle is addressing these words to Christians, implying that they have some of these things to put off after they have become Christians. "Put off all these—anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife," works of the flesh and of the devil. These things more or less attach to you. And put on all these—meekness, self-control, patience, faith, long-suffering, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love. As we do these things, our hearts will be in the attitude the Apostle mentions. We shall have attained that which God purposes, designs; namely, "love out of a pure heart."

DEFINITION OF "GOOD CONSCIENCE"

The Apostle proceeds to say, "and a good conscience." Conscience seems to be that moral quality of the mind which admonishes in regard to right and wrong. Some persons have a keen conscience and can quickly discern as to what is right and what is wrong. Others have a very dull conscience and find it difficult to determine between right and wrong, or else are measurably indifferent as to the moral quality of their course. While God created man with a good conscience, ability to determine accurately what is right and what is wrong, sin has depraved this conscience. Hence it is the duty of every Christian to get his conscience made right, to educate his conscience to discern correctly. God lays down the principles of righteousness in his Word. It is through the law of God that the Christian is able to discern these principles, to see what is right or wrong in principle.

The Golden Rule admonishes us, Do unto your neighbor as you would have him do unto you under similar circumstances. Consider what you would like to have your neighbor do unto you under certain circumstances and conditions, and thus help conscience to see what is the right thing to do. There are many things which are morally wrong, which are forbidden in the law of God. These would be more readily discerned by the conscience, as there could be but one course of action possible in harmony with the expressed will of God on the matter. But there are other things which require a conscience trained to fine discernment. The Golden Rule is especially helpful here. As the principles of righteousness become firmly established in our characters, there is little difficulty in discerning the course of duty and of love.

One whose conscience has not been properly trained by the Word of God might be entirely honest and yet be pursuing a wrong course. A man might follow a certain course for years; he might have been doing so with all good conscience, that is, in all sincerity. Perhaps long after he has become a Christian he would come to see that something he had been practicing was not wise or proper. He would say, "I see now that I have been taking a wrong view of this matter. Hereafter I shall be better able to see my proper course under such circumstances. I realize that the principle of justice needs to be thoroughly ingrained in my being in order that I may be more pleasing to God. Christian love goes beyond justice, but justice must come first." A properly developed Christian has a properly educated conscience.

A "good conscience," as used in our text, is a rightly educated conscience. It is not one which is always accusing its owner, making him feel that he is always doing wrong. There are morbid consciences which are constantly accusing, not able to get a proper balance. A truly good conscience is one which is well balanced. One may have a scale, for instance, that is perverted either one way or the other. A scale which is rightly adjusted will stand level. It is reliable. And so with a good conscience—it is one which can determine the slightest deviation from God's law.

HONESTY RESPECTING FAITH ESSENTIAL

Lastly, St. Paul adds, "and an undissembled faith." An undissembled faith is a faith that is properly represented to others. It is not deceitful. To dissemble is to misrepresent. We are to have a faith which is not misrepresented, which is undissembled, as the Apostle says. We as Christians have a certain standard set before us in the Lord's Word. We are to go beyond the Law. We are under a still higher law—the law of sacrificial love. Our faith takes hold of things not seen as yet, that portion of the Lord's arrangement for us which goes beyond what is now visible to us with the natural eye. Whatever the Lord has revealed to us that our faith has been able to accept as his will, must be held honestly and loyally. We must be honest with respect to our faith and in respect to our life.

There are many who may have a good conception of justice and who may be fine people in many ways, and yet they might dissemble as regards their faith. They might think more or less that the end justifies the means, and that they might profess something in regard to their faith which would be for the good of someone else, even though it would not be true. There are people all over the world who thus dissemble in respect to their faith. They misrepresent their faith. They do not believe what they are teaching or what they profess to believe.

Many are teaching eternal torment. If you ask them as to their belief on this subject, they will say, "I do not be-

lieve that doctrine, but it seems necessary to preach it." Others are teaching Higher Criticism, Evolution, New Thought, etc.,—deceiving and being deceived—yet still claiming to be Christians. All such people are in a wrong condition. Unless they speedily correct this they will not be fit for the kingdom; for the purpose of the law, love, is to be fulfilled in those who will be accepted for that high and honorable station. This love requires, first of all, supreme loyalty to God, which means loyalty to his Word. What is the use of having an end of the law, an ultimate object of the law, if that end, that object, is never to be attained? Christ met this end, or object, of the law. The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in him actually. The true church now reach this in spirit. That is to say, their hearts, their minds, are in harmony with this law; and they are striving day by day to more and more bring their lives—their words, thoughts and actions—into full accord with this perfect law of love.

THE LAW OF THE NEW CREATION

The Scriptures everywhere represent that in God's estimation love is the principal thing. Neither justice nor other qualities, other virtues, are ignored; but this quality is placed at the very top of the list of Christian graces. From the list which the Apostle Paul gives of the fruits of the holy Spirit, we see that at the head he places love, then come joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-restraint. (Galatians 5:22, 23) The Apostle Peter gives the list of fruits of the Spirit as cumulative—as a process of addition, leading up to the sum of all the graces. He begins with faith, the foundation. Then are to be diligently added, fortitude, knowledge, self-restraint, patience, brotherly love, then the broad love which includes all the world, even our enemies.

We are to remember, however, that love is not something which is instantly developed. It grows. Therefore those who have some love today, something of this holy Spirit, may have more of it tomorrow, still more of it in a year; for it is a matter of development. Since God himself is love, the implanting of the divine likeness in humanity six thousand years ago when Father Adam was created signifies that God gave man the quality of love. Even in man's fallen condition we see this manifested more or less on every hand—natural love. This in many cases has become considerably perverted into self-love. But there are some very noble people who have a considerable degree of love naturally, who have much of original God-likeness still remaining. They have much less to overcome in this direction than those who are more selfish. All the elements of sin seem to be more or less connected with selfishness—thus warring against the best interests of the individual.

The love which the Bible commends to us as new creatures is the love which had its start in our spirit-begetting. Whoever has been begotten of the Spirit of God has some of this pure, unselfish love of which St. Paul speaks. In proportion as one grows as a new creature, he grows in love—so that he may gradually be filled, his capacity, for love increasing in proportion to his growth. At the beginning of our Christian experience, we merely have a beginning of love, as it were. This is to spread and fill our whole system. This love of God will make us more loving, kind, gentle, toward our friends, toward everybody, even toward animals.

But the Scriptures draw attention to the fact that as the love of God develops in us it will have a special interest in the brethren—those who have received the same Spirit. Therefore, wherever the Spirit of God is it will have a sympathetic flow toward others of the same spirit. Whoever has the Spirit of God at all will be sure to love his brethren, because he will see the mind of God in them; and this love will increase as he develops and as he sees development in the brethren.

All the brethren in Christ, however, have imperfect bodies, and therefore can give but imperfect expression to the spirit of love. And since the brethren are brought closer together through their common hopes and ambitions, they are likely to become more of a trial to each other than are the world. They are tempted sometimes to say to a brother or a sister, "Well, you do not show much of the spirit of love!" Thus the spirit of criticism is aroused, and love is put to the test. In proportion as we grow in love, this spirit of love will be ours and we shall take a kindlier view of the frailities of the brethren. Our daily experiences should teach us more and more of our own shortcomings. The discovery of our own faults and the battling with them should humble us. Whoever realizes his own shortcomings should extend the feeling of sympathy toward his fellow pilgrims in the heavenly way, who are fighting similar battles. Unless we do so we shall not be pleasing to our God.

The fact that the brethren have this Spirit of God and are seeking to develop love, however much they may come short of their own ideals and of our ideals for them, demands that we love them. Our sympathy for them must broaden and deepen so that if we see them overtaken in a fault we shall seek to restore them in love, remembering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. As to the depth of love we should manifest, it is clearly laid down in the Scriptures. We should love the brethren as Christ loved us. This is very broad. Christ loved us to the extent that he was willing to lay down his life for us. We should be full of love, sympathy, for our brethren in Christ, desiring to be helpful to them. Whatever we do for them is a manifestation of our love for the Lord.

The Lord has arranged that our love for the brethren and our laying down our lives for them and in their defense is all done to him; and he so esteems it. If the time should come when it would be necessary, there should be a readiness to lay down our lives for them. But more particularly, we are to lay these down inch by inch in their service, whether it be by cleaning off the snow from the pavement or caring for them when they are ill, or cooking the dinner or the breakfast, or mailing papers to them to encourage them in the good way—no matter what the service. All these ways and many others are ministries to those who are the Lord's—laying down our lives for them. We rejoice to have such privileges, such opportunities—using our time and strength as the Lord in his providence shall indicate, realizing that the only use we have for our present life is to lay it down in the service of the Lord's brethren and ours, and to do good to any as we have opportunity, giving the brethren the preference.

We may never attain to the place, while we are in the flesh, where we shall say no word, do not act, to hurt a brother. We all have imperfections that we are striving against. But "The Lord looketh upon the heart," and not at the imperfect execution. If he sees the earnest endeavor to do his will, he will cover the deficiencies and imperfections with the merit of our Savior. If we make a mistake, we are to be glad to rectify it and to make proper apologies and reparation —assuring the brother that we did not mean to hurt his feelings. Or, if under temptation we felt less concern than we should about wounding him, we should ask pardon, confessing our sorrow, and then confess our fault at the throne of grace, asking forgiveness in Jesus' name.

If, then, we hope to be of those who will be granted a place with Christ in his throne, let us see to it that by his grace we attain the end of the commandment, the end of the law, as given to the new creation. Let it be "love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith"—a love which inspires to the willing, joyful sacrifice of every earthly hope and ambition, and which gladly lays down even life itself for the brethren, that we may be accounted worthy of the heavenly inheritance awaiting the "more than conquerors."—Romans 8:37.

FULL DELIVERANCE PROMISED TO GOD'S SAINTS

"He shall call upon me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him." **—Psalm 91:15.**

When considering the above text, we are naturally interested to know who or what class would be thus favored of God and whether or not we might become members of that class. The context seems to show that the Psalm is prophetic and refers to the Lord Jesus and the church—The Christ as a whole. No doubt it has been true in a certain sense of some others. For instance, when Abraham called upon the Lord, God heard him in his troubles and blessed him. And the Lord will yet give him great honor, because he loved and trusted God. The same might be said of the faithful ones all through the Jewish dispensation. But the Psalm seems to refer especially to The Christ. These are the ones who bear the closest relationship to God. Their love is manifested in a special sense by their faithfulness to the will of God, their faithfulness in honoring his name, their faithfulness in upholding his truth, in being willing to die in God's service, in laying down their lives for the brethren, in developing the fruits of the holy Spirit; for all this is included in their covenant.

It is this class, therefore, that the Lord will answer when

they call upon him; it is this class that he will deliver and honor, will care for in trouble. All who come to God, must necessarily, before they can be accepted, enter into a Covenant of Sacrifice with him through Christ, giving up their will—loving the Lord and his will better than themselves and their own will or the will of any other. Of course, a large proportion of those who proclaim themselves to be Christians are merely nominal Christians—Christians in name only, who never made a covenant with God.

Of those who do enter into this covenant, not many, judging from what we can observe, carry it out faithfully, submitting their lives and their every interest to God's will. Noticeable examples of the faithful ones of the past were our Lord Jesus and his apostles. And there have been others, of course, of this faithful class throughout this Gospel age, now closing. All these are styled by Jehovah his jewels, and are to be made by him into a glorious diadem, the Lord Jesus being its brightest and choicest gem. These are to show forth during eternal ages Jehovah's wisdom, justice, love and power. Throughout this Gospel age God has been working in these to will and to do his good pleasure.

CONDITIONS OF OBTAINING THE PROMISE

But God works in no one contrary to that one's own will. If we wish to step out from under Christ's instruction, there is nothing to prevent us. God would that we remain, but is not willing to urge upon us, to press upon us, this matter. God wishes only such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth, because they love him. This class who seek faithfully to do the Lord's will because they love him may call upon him in every trouble and difficulty. His answer will not come in an audible voice, and may not come in the manner that we expect; but he will answer in the best way the petitions of his saints which are asked in harmony with his will, his Word. That is, as Jesus said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you [if you remember and act upon my teaching], ye may ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you;" for those thus abiding in him would ask only those things which God has provided for them, only such things as his providence has arranged for them, only such things as his Word authorizes his saints to pray for. The Lord has promised these that they shall have their requests. He has been blessing and caring for his people throughout the Gospel age. Their needs are often supplied before they call. They are to have the Word of God clearly in mind that their prayers and endeavors may be in line with his will. Thus their disappointments will be his appointments, and will be accepted as of the Lord.

THE BLESSINGS OF TRIBULATION

"I will be with him in trouble," is the promise. The intimation here is that the Lord will not, necessarily, prevent our getting into trouble. We might see the trouble coming and pray to the Lord, but he might not deliver us from the trouble. And we should not ask that we might be spared the affliction if his wisdom sees it is best for us to have it. The trouble might prove very beneficial to us.

The Lord has already told us in his Word that we are to rejoice even under tribulation; for tribulation, rightly received, will work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So while the Lord does not promise us that we shall escape trouble. He does promise that with the trouble he will give his children consolation of heart, sustaining grace, that will enable them to rejoice in the midst of their tribulation. (2 Corinthians 4:6-18; 12:9, 10; Isaiah 43:1, 2.) This was exemplified in our Lord Jesus and in the Apostles. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God in prison with their feet fast in the stocks and their backs bleeding from the whippings which they had received. They could rejoice in tribulation for Christ's sake.

The Lord is ever with his people; therefore they should not be discouraged. His children have the comfort and assistance of the letter of the truth and the spirit of the truth. But they have all these blessings only in proportion as they are willing to exercise faith; for the glories promised are not yet theirs in reality; these are theirs only by promise now.

OUR FULL DELIVERANCE

"I will deliver him and honor him." The deliverance of the Lord's saints, in the fullest sense of the word, will be by their participation in the first, chief resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was delivered from all his trials and afflictions when he was raised from the dead. The promise to the church also is that we shall be delivered when our resurrection "change" shall come to us. "Sown in weakness," we shall be "raised in power;" sown an animal body, we shall be "raised a spiritual body." This will be the full deliverance, and with it will come the promised honor and exaltation.

There are deliverances, of course, for the children of God at the present time, according to our need. And the Lord gives us a certain kind of honor, but not usually the kind of honor that the world appreciates. This honor may come mixed with such tribulation as would make it not desirable in the world's eye. But the honor that will come to the saints in the end will be such as all will know and will appreciate. All the members of Christ will share in the kingdom glories and honors with their Head. He and the members of his body glorified will reign in the Father's kingdom, and will be associated together throughout all eternity in the great work of God.

"Press on, beloved, in the race,
The goal is very near.
Faint not, thou soon shalt see his face—
Then, be thou of good cheer!"

THE GENERAL WORK NOT INTERRUPTED

A notice in THE WATCH TOWER to the effect that a goodly number of the friends had left Bethel has been misunderstood. Those who left are quite competent to earn their own living, and more. They left Bethel in as good financial condition as they came to it, because all expenses were met while here.

The general work is not interrupted, but proceeds as usual. Only the Drama Department and the Newspaper Department were particularly affected by the curtailment of expense. The pilgrim work progresses as usual; also the colporteur work and the tract distribution. In the latter case, however, we are making one change; we prepay postage or express or freight charges only on regular volunteer matter and on small sample parcels or mail. We have learned with regret that some who have ordered free literature have not been careful of their stewardship, but have allowed the literature to lie idle, unused. If now they pay the express charges, it will make them more careful not to order more than they will use. In the case of volunteer matter supplied to classes, it is our understanding that the class secretary takes responsibility. Free literature for the announcement of pilgrim visits will be classed in with the regular volunteer matter to be sent express prepaid.

LOVE'S ALCHEMY

"Love is the filling from one's own
Another's cup.
Love is a daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of the stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way.
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes;
And asks not, "Must I give?" but, "May
I sacrifice?"
Love hides its grief, that other hearts
And lips may sing;
And burdened, walks, that other lives
May, buoyant, wing.
Brother, hast thou a love like this
Within thy soul?
'Twill change thy name to saint when thou
Dost reach this goal."

HUMAN WORKS VS. WORKS OF THE NEW CREATURE

"Beloved, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Philippians 2:12, 13.

Our text is not an exhortation to the world. The Apostle is not urging natural men to work out their own salvation. The exhortation is to the church of Christ alone, the "beloved," as St. Paul calls them. According to many theologians this advice would seem strange, because of the commonly accepted belief that a person is saved as soon as he becomes one of the

Lord's people. To this we agree in part—"we are saved by hope." But the actual salvation we have not yet attained. It will not be attained until we shall have experienced the "change" of the first resurrection. Up to that time there is always a possibility of our leaving the faith, being turned away from the faith—away from seeking to follow on faithfully to the attainment of the Lord's ultimate will concerning us. This salvation to the high calling is to be worked out by the development of character.

God has promised that certain characters shall attain to the highest place in his gift, the chief place of exaltation and favor, to be partakers of his own divine nature. The Scriptures indicate that there are others who will attain to an inferior place—vessels unto lesser honor. (2 Timothy 2:20, 21) So we see that we should be on the qui vive, on the alert, to win the very best offered, the attainment of which will be pleasing to God as well as being the best thing for ourselves. Those who have entered into a covenant with the Lord must attain spirit nature, either on the divine plane or a lower one; else they will lose all and die the second death. We are called in one hope of our calling—that of attaining the divine nature. There has been no other call issued during the Gospel age.

The question arises, Does this exhortation to work out our own salvation conflict with St. Paul's other statement, that our salvation "is not of works, lest any man should boast?" We reply, No; our salvation from death is entirely by faith. As men we have no opportunity of doing any works that would justify us before God. Until we have been accepted into God's family no works that we could do would be acceptable. God who is perfect, is not pleased to receive anything imperfect, either works or anything else. But when we have received the forgiveness of our sins—not by works, but by faith—and have become sons of God, through consecration and Spirit-begetting, then comes the time when we can do acceptable works; for we are then members of the Lord's family, and the holy Spirit within us through this begetting now has an opportunity to show itself, to do some works. In other words, as imperfect human beings, we cannot work out our salvation; but as new creatures we can do this.—Philippians 4:13.

OUR PART OF THE WORK

If after its beginning the new creature never became active, it would never develop strength and character, just as a child would not develop if it never moved its limbs. We receive the holy Spirit at the time of the Lord's acceptance of us, at our consecration. But this new creature germ cannot long remain quiet. It must grow through nourishment, through feeding. At first we "desire the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby." We become strong by the exercise of ourselves as new creatures. But it is God who started the new life in us. All our studying would not have made new creatures of us; no amount of works would have done it. These things would never have brought us into the Lord's family; but after we come into his family through the Lord Jesus, these good works will begin to show.

The new creature takes over the old body as its possession, to be its servant. Legally, the old body is dead, having been slain as a sacrifice. But actually, we still have it in lieu of our new body, that it may serve us until the new creature is sufficiently developed to be given its resurrection body, and until our work here is done. It is the possession of this old, imperfect body that makes it necessary for us to wear the robe of Christ's righteousness while we remain in the flesh.

The new creature masters its old body, gets more and more control of the old disposition of the flesh. This may be more manifest to our neighbor's and friends, and to our brethren, than to ourselves. The Father works in us as new creatures, through Christ. And as we as new creatures exercise ourselves in the control of the flesh, we become strong. Thus, as the Apostle says, we more and more become copies of God's dear Son. "It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do his good pleasure," and as we thus will and do, we accomplish our salvation. The Apostle is speaking here, not about the natural man, but of the "beloved" class, and is explaining that God wishes us to know that now, as we are his sons, he is working in us to accomplish his will.

GOD'S PART A GREAT WORK

There is a work that God did for us before we ever could have come into Christ—a great and important work. That work was the purchasing of us through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus, and the arrangement by which the knowledge of this reaches us. Through the circumstances, incidents, affairs of our lives, he showed us the way by which we might become his children through full consecration. All this is the work of God, and in the Scriptures is called drawing and calling. "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him," said the Master. It is the Father who draws, but by way of the Son. Then we are called with a "heavenly calling." After we have accepted the call upon the Lord's terms, there is a work to be done in us—a great work. And God is doing this work.

Elsewhere the Apostle says of this class, "Ye are God's workmanship." Our Lord Jesus says of these, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The Father is the great husbandman. It is for God to prune the branches of the vine, to give them all the experiences requisite to their fruit-bearing. We all need pruning to develop the best of which we are capable as new creatures, and to prove what we shall be qualified for.

So God's work in us progresses. He works through the world, through the brethren, through all the varied experiences of life, and through his precious promises. In proportion as we love God, we get the good out of our experiences. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose." If we know this, we shall receive in the spirit of submission and trust all that comes to us. The Lord continues to feed us upon his Word. Our progress is a matter of gradual development—a growing in grace, a growing in knowledge, a growing into God's character-likeness. Thus he works in his children to will and to do his good pleasure. He shows us more and more what his good pleasure is. Whoever becomes a child of God realizes later on more clearly than when he made his consecration what is the will of God, the mind of God. He comes to see things from an altogether different angle from his viewpoint when he first entered upon the narrow way.

As the Lord works in us through his various providences, etc., we are to accept these nourishments for the new creature, appropriating them to ourselves, that we may grow thereby—grow in strength of character, and thus be prepared for the kingdom, for the glory, honor, immortality awaiting us if faithful. Of course, these great blessings and honors will not be given us unless we become such characters as the Lord will approve. The Apostle exhorts us to remember that what is to be reckoned on is, How much as a new creature have you done in battling against the weaknesses of the flesh, in overcoming unfavorable surroundings? How fully have you really developed the likeness of Christ in your character?

ELIJAH'S WORK BEFORE ASCENSION

SEPTEMBER 19.—1 KINGS 20:1-21.

DEFEATS THROUGH DRUNKENNESS—SYRIA'S KING WARS WITH ISRAEL—ISRAEL'S CAPITAL IN DANGER—KING BENHADAB CONFIDENT OF VICTORY—HE CELEBRATES IT IN ADVANCE IN DRUNKEN ORGIES—ISRAEL'S SMALL ARMY UNDER DIVINE COMMAND DEFEATS THE SYRIANS WITH TERRIBLE SLAUGHTER—MODERN WAR'S CONTRAST—WHY GOD PERMITS WARS, CALAMITIES, SICKNESS, INSANITY, ETC.—WHEN WARS WILL CEASE—SHOULD CHRISTIANS ENGAGE IN WAR?

Our lesson recounts the attack of the Syrians upon the Israelites, whose capital city, Samaria, is besieged and its king in fear of the necessity of capitulation. The Syrian king boastfully tells what he will do and commands a surrender. King Ahab, perplexed, considers resistance useless, until the Lord's message revives his courage, directing him how to proceed with the battle. Following this direction a great victory for the Israelites was gained—this partly because the Syrian king Ben-Hadad, was very drunk, and many of his lords with him. They were thus incapacitated from using the vital strength of their large army, and suffered great defeat.

All the wars of the past, however, pale into insignificance before the present great struggle progressing in Europe. One of the British lords, addressing workmen recently and urging efficiency in the manufacture of war munitions, declared that the British had expended for ammunition in Belgium recently more money than during the entire Boer war. The rapidity with which modern guns are fired and the terrible slaughter which they accomplish are appalling. Authentic reports declare that twelve millions of the picked men of Europe have already been either killed, wounded or made prisoners; and we may safely assume that the armies now contending number ten millions.

When we consider that one man, armed with a rapid-fire

gun, is more than an equivalent of twenty men, yea, than of a hundred men as in former wars, we get some conception of what a terrible war the present one is. The Scriptures seem to declare that it will bring no great victory to any of the contestants, but that eventually all the nations thus engaged will be terribly weakened, not only in the loss of their most able manhood, but also financially impoverished and embarrassed, for their bonds will probably never be paid.

LESSON TAUGHT BY THE WAR

It is a sad reflection upon the boasted civilization of our day that such a war should be considered the only way by which the great nations of the world could come to an agreement on matters of mutual interest in respect to an earth which God has given to the children of men as their common heritage. When we consider that the nations at war are claiming to be Christian nations, the thought is all the more horrible. Our only comfort is in the thought that the poor deluded people do not understand the meaning of the term Christian, and that the great mass of them never were Christians. True Christians, saints, no doubt are to be found in all the armies of the countries where conscription is the law. Bible students from the different armies from time to time give us word of their welfare and of their endeavor to hold up the light and to show forth the Lord's praises, even under such terrible conditions.

Surely the people of the world are beginning to awaken to a realization of the fact that the boasted four hundred millions of Christians are, for the most part, as far from God and from Christian ideals as are the twelve hundred millions of heathens. Their awakening should help them to realize what the true church is, and that her mission is not to convert the world but to prepare herself to be Messiah's kingdom class, the bride, the Lamb's wife, Messiah's joint-heir in his heavenly kingdom. If the war should teach this lesson to any considerable number, it will not have been in vain. And if these saints of God, learning the way more perfectly, shall carry out a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, and thus make their calling and election sure to a place in the kingdom, they will have a share in the first resurrection to spiritual conditions. Then, associated with their Redeemer, they will bless the world of mankind on the human plane, uplifting the willing and obedient to human perfection.

WHY GOD PERMITS WAR

Many are inquiring, Why does God permit war—yea, why do the Scriptures imply that God brings about wars? We reply that it makes little difference to the person dying whether his death comes as a result of a bayonet wound, a sword wound or a bullet wound, or whether it comes from consumption, pneumonia, smallpox or general constitutional breakdown. And if it makes little difference to the individual, we may say that it makes less difference to the Almighty. God's penalty upon our race is a death penalty—come how it may. For six thousand years the penalty has been in operation; and the entire race is going down to the tomb under that sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die."

The hope for all, then, is in Christ and through his death —by the resurrection of the dead which He will accomplish during the Millennium. His faithful church, his bride, who is to share with him in the kingdom, will be the first resurrected, and that to a plane of glory, honor and immortality. The remainder of the world will come forth, "every man in his own order," as the Bible declares. They will come forth that they may learn of the goodness of God, the wisdom of God, the power of God the love of God, and be enabled to contrast these with what they learned in their previous lifetime under the reign of Sin and Death. Meantime, the Bible declares, from the divine viewpoint the whole world of mankind are falling asleep in death, to await the awakening of Messiah's kingdom and the beginning then of the grand opportunity which he has secured for all, whereby they may escape from sin and, ultimately, from death.

"THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE"

The divine promise and provision is that under Messiah's kingdom wars will be made to cease forever, and all other calamities will cease. Instead of mankind's going down into the tomb, the reverse order will be established—the resurrection of the dead. Instead of sickness, disease and insanity will come healing, strength, restitution. (Acts 3:19-21) Speaking of the effect of his Millennial kingdom, Jesus declares that the curse will be rolled away and God's blessing will come on instead, until there shall be no more sighing or dying or crying or pain. All these blessings are as yet only promises, and hence only for the church to rejoice in or understand—and they according to their degree of faith in God and of understanding of his Word.

The Bible informs us that after Messiah's spiritual kingdom shall have taken charge of the world's affairs, nothing will be permitted to hurt or destroy in all God's glorious kingdom. This will mean that a spiritual police force will have humanity under absolute control. Every misdeed will be punished as soon as it is determined upon and before it shall have been put into effect. Likewise, every good act, good word and good thought will bring a blessing of restitution, health, strength—mental, moral, physical. Under such conditions the world will very speedily learn to differentiate right from wrong. They will speedily learn of the change of dispensation, and that thenceforth every sinful thought, word and act will be sure to receive punishment, while every good thought, good word and good act will be sure to receive a blessing. The Bible tells of this condition of things, saying, "When thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 11:9; 26:9; 28:17.

CHRISTIANS ENGAGING IN WAR

Many are perplexed to understand the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles in respect to war, when they contrast these with the Lord's directions to the Jews and his blessing of their wars. This matter can be understood only from the one viewpoint—the Bible viewpoint.

The first invitation to fallen men to become sons of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, dates from the time of Jesus, and particularly from the time that he died for our sins, arose from the dead, ascended to heaven to appear in the presence of God on our behalf, and as a result of that work shed forth on the waiting disciples the holy Spirit of God and the begetting power to a new nature. None prior to that had ever been sons of God from the time that Adam sinned. At very most Moses was a servant and Abraham a friend. St. John assures us that the liberty or privilege to become sons of God came through our Lord Jesus at his first advent to those who fully accepted him.—John 1:12, 13.

These sons of God, otherwise the body of Christ, otherwise the bride of Christ, are not of the world, but chosen and separated from the world by the divine call and spirit-begetting. To these Jesus said, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "I have chosen you [out of the world], and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." (John 17:14; 15:16, 8) Now the fruits of the Spirit, the Apostle tells us, are manifest—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. These things being in us abounding in good measure will make us that we shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that we shall have an abundant entrance ministered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come," and which we are to enter by resurrection change, in due time—Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:5-11.

SCRIPTURES MISAPPLIED

Does God give special direction to this class of His spirit-begotten children in respect to war, or are they in this matter subject to the powers that be? We reply that all the Lord's people are soldiers of the cross, and that the Apostle has forewarned us that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. (2 Corinthians 10:4) There is no commission anywhere in the Bible for God's consecrated people to war, to fight, to kill, to take from others either life or property. The present great war is merely a demonstration of the fact that if any considerable number of those participating in it ever were Christians, they have been merely babes in Christ and did not understand the teachings of the Lord.

Nevertheless, we perceive that in all the warring countries the professed ministers of Christ are acting as recruiting agents. All kinds of arguments are used to persuade the young men of the country, contrary to the teachings of the Master. The same men who are accustomed to laugh at the declaration that the Turkish soldiers in former wars were promised, in event of death, a sure passport to heavenly Paradise—these same ministers are now urging all the eligible with whom they have influence to prepare to go to battle to lay down their lives. While the Germans have put upon their soldiers' belts, "God with us," the British ministers are quoting Bible texts to encourage enlistment of their young men and to throw a halo of glory upon the soldier dead.

O blessed Jesus, Friend of friends!
Lift over us thy sheltering arm,
And while amid this evil world,
Protect us from its guilt and harm.

THE TWO PARTS OF THE HARVEST WORK

Some of the dear people of God have wondered what relationship the PHOTO-DRAMA and the colporteur work have to the end of the harvest. One's knowledge of the DRAMA would necessarily be limited to his contact with it. There are some who have heard of it, but who have not much knowledge of it. The general reports received since its production have been very satisfactory. In some parts the classes have been largely increased in number. In certain places the friends at first felt disappointed; but these reported later that after a few Sundays, when the people had had time to let the truth sink more or less into their minds, a number came out of the churches, where they could not get satisfactory food, and began to attend our meetings. As a rule, wherever the DRAMA has been shown the classes have been increased. Some very remarkable characters have come into the light of present truth—some of the Lord's people who before were in the darkness through prejudice and superstition, and others from the world. These who became thus interested have been started to investigating and reading the STUDIES, through the colporteur work.

Similarly, the 42,000,000 copies of BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY put out this last year, while they have not brought millions into the classes by any means, have no doubt been doing a good work, a work of stirring up the minds of the people, awakening them to think, and reaching some of the great company class. Others, perhaps, have been brought directly to full consecration through our free literature. All of these works seem to belong to the harvest; for they did not belong to a previous time.

THE PLOWMAN OVERTAKING THE REAPER

The harvest work has been increased rapidly to its consummation. We are not to understand that the harvest is yet wholly finished; for there are two parts to the work—the gathering of the wheat, and the burning of the tares. We might have thought that the gathering of the wheat has been accomplished; that if our expectations are true, with the end of the Gentile Times the number of the very elect would be complete, so that no more could enter. We are not positive of this, and we must not go by guessing. The latter part of the harvest work is to be the burning of the tares, and the waking up of the great company class and preparing them to go out and purchase the oil for their lamps. Now seems to be the particular time, if we have the right focus on the matter, in which the great company class would hear—when the foolish virgins would get the light, get the oil, and the time when the wise virgins have gone in, or are soon to go in, to the marriage.

In the text of Scripture which speaks of the plowman overtaking the reaper, we are to remember that the reaper is the Lord, and that the plowman is the great time of trouble. This time of trouble will overtake the reaping work and bring it to a close. But the time of trouble will go on, the plowman will keep on plowing, after all our efforts have ended in respect to the reaping. But meantime, before this dark night fully sets in, we are to go right on with the work which the Lord has put into our hands. The truth is designed, not only to perfect the "bride" of Christ, the chief of the firstborns, but to develop the great company class, and also to be a witness to the whole world. Any carelessness on our part, or any cessation of activity in the service of the truth while opportunity yet remains, would in our estimation be a great mistake. If we are loyal, the Lord will give us far greater opportunities in the future—the blessing of all the nations, all the kindreds, all the families of the earth.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

THOSE CONSECRATING BETWEEN THE AGES

It is our thought that with the closing of the "door" of this Gospel age there will be no more begetting of the holy Spirit to the spirit nature. Any afterward coming to God through consecration, before the inauguration of the restitution work, will be accepted by him, not to the spirit plane of being, but to the earthly plane. Such would come in under the same conditions as the ancient worthies who were accepted of God. The ancient worthies came in, no call being opened to them—the high calling not being yet open, and the restitution opportunities not open. But they freely gave themselves up to God without knowing what blessings their consecration would bring, except that they had the intimation that they would, in the future life, have a "better resurrection" than would the remainder of the world.

Our thought is that whoever under such conditions as these will make a full consecration to the Lord, to leave all to follow in his ways, and will live up faithfully, loyally, to that consecration, may be privileged to be counted as a similar class to those who preceded this Gospel age. We know of no reason why the Lord would refuse to receive those who make a consecration after the close of the Gospel age high calling and before the full opening of the Millennium.

THE BURNING OF THE TARES

Whether the overcoming saints will have a part in the burning of the tare class is a thought not very clear at this time. "This honor have all his saints, to execute the judgments written." All the saints would include, then, those who would be living in the world when the judgments are executed, as well as the resurrected saints. Just how any living here would have a share in executing the judgments written we do not see; but we are keeping our eyes open, with the thought that this may be so.

It would seem that the burning of the tares has now been going on for some time; that is, some who have professed that they are Christians and have thought that they are Christians, but have never entered into true relationship with the Lord and become of the wheat class, are to be destroyed as tares, shown in their true light. If questioned now as to their consecration, these will say, "I am no saint, but I wish to be right and just in my dealings so far as possible." Thus such demonstrate that they have not understood what it is to be a real Christian.

This great war in Europe is waking up people to think in a way that they have never thought before; and now is the time when the real Christianity and the counterfeit will be differentiated. Many people will come more or less rapidly to recognize this. But there is a large proportion of tares that have not yet been burned. Emperor William of Germany, King George of England, the Czar of Russia, the Pope, etc., have not yet learned the difference between the true Christianity and the imitation. So it is with many others. But the burning will progress to its completion, and the true and the false will be completely manifested to all.

OBEDIENCE AND KINGSHIP

SEPTEMBER 26.—PSALM 21.

THE GLORY OF MESSIAH'S KINGDOM—THE REWARD OF HIS OBEDIENCE TO JEHOVAH—THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS FOES A NECESSITY—ARE WE FORTY YEARS INTO THE MILLENNIUM?

"The King shall joy in thy strength, O Jehovah, and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!"—V. 1.

The Jews took a practical view of the promised kingdom of Messiah, in which they were to have a glorious place, and in which all nations were to be blessed. Two things they failed to realize: first, that a redemption-price for the sin of Adam must be provided before Adam and his race could be returned to divine favor and everlasting life in Eden; second, that Messiah himself, before having so great an exaltation as Jehovah purposed, must demonstrate his worthiness to it by humility, obedience, loyalty, even unto death. St. Paul points out that Jesus the Redeemer did all this—that he left the glory which he had with the Father, humbled himself to become a man (though not a sinner), and then as a man further humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross; that on this account God highly exalted him far above angels, making him partaker of the divine nature and inheritor of all the promises of glory, honor, immortality.—Philippians 2:8-11.

Many who see this much fail to get the Scriptural declaration that God's purpose equally included a church class as a bride to Messiah—as sharer of his sufferings and trials, and sharer of his exaltation and glory. Only when this is seen can we properly understand the delay in the establishment of the kingdom. It has delayed in order that the entire church, foreordained of God, might be completed, tested, proved, glorified in the first resurrection, and then inaugurated with Messiah as the heavenly kingdom.

Many peculiar ideas prevail because of a failure to take the Scriptural proposition and because of a false theory that the kingdom has already been set up in glory. Ridding our minds of these difficulties, Bible students are now discerning Messiah's kingdom near at hand—even at the door. They are more and more realizing that the present terrible war is the beginning of a series of troubles which will wind up the present order of things and inaugurate the new dispensation of Messiah's kingdom, for which we have so long prayed, "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven."

Although it will be a spiritual kingdom, no less so than

Satan's kingdom of the present time, and the Father's kingdom—invisible to men—nevertheless it will be a real kingdom, exercising power and authority more completely than any earthly kingdom could, because not handicapped by human limitations and conditions. Moreover, the Bible indicates to us that the ancient worthies of the Jewish line will be resurrected to perfection and in an earthly glory will become visible representatives to men of the glorified spiritual Christ, Head and body. Jesus emphasized this thought to the Jews saying, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom." (Luke 13:28) But respecting himself he declared, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more." (John 14:19) All will see him, however, in the sense that eventually all the eyes of understanding will be opened, that all may see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God fill the whole earth.—Revelation 1:7; Habakkuk 2:14.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM BEGUN

Many Bible students are claiming that, according to the prophecies, Messiah's kingdom began in 1878. They claim that while its chief activities have been in respect to the church—the harvesting of the wheat, the separating of the tares, etc.—nevertheless it has had a worldwide influence, also, in that during this time of the dawning of the new dispensation God has been lifting the veil of ignorance and showing mankind mechanical and chemical secrets which have proved invaluable thus far, and which undoubtedly will increase in the near future, when the Messianic kingdom shall have been fully inaugurated, at the close of the great time of trouble, already beginning in Europe, and in Mexico.

Amongst the other indications of the operation of the kingdom influence in the world, Bible students point to the wonderful progress made as respects reform along the lines of intemperance. The wonderful wave of prohibition which has spread voluntarily over many of the states of the American Union has been supplemented by the necessities of the war in foreign countries. We must not expect too much along these lines. We must expect more or less of reaction, especially in the case of so sudden a turn as the war brought upon Europeans.

Indeed, evidence is not wanting that the first ferver of prohibition in Europe is reacting. We had similar experiences in America, but we perceive that as a whole the world is moving onward in this respect in a right direction. The movement against opium and other narcotics also tends in the right direction, as do the many exposures of vice and the lessons being given as respects the terrible penalty of vice, as witnessed in the now well-recognized fact that syphillis stops brain development and generally in a few years leads to insanity.

While continuing to pray, "Thy kingdom come," let us as God's consecrated people continue to labor in character-preparation, that we may be found worthy of a place in that kingdom, making our calling and election sure. And let us continue to note evidences on every hand that we are in the dawning of the kingdom, even though its Sun of Righteousness cannot fully arise until the church shall have passed beyond the veil. In this connection we call attention to an interesting report in respect to one of our states, which, having passed prohibition laws, is said by its governor to be enjoying grand blessings of prosperity—Kansas. The following extract is from the "North American."

RESTITUTION BLESSINGS IN KANSAS

Recently the Governor of Kansas issued a public statement, saying that he hoped no one would waste pity upon the people of his state. We quote:—

"'With more than $200,000,000 on deposit in our State and National Banks, we could weather a worse storm than this without hardship.' This money, equally divided among the men, women, children and babies of Kansas, would give each of them $118 in cash, not to mention the tidy sum of $1,684 each is credited with as his or her share of the State's assessed wealth. Kansas last year produced $325,000,000 worth of farm products.

"In eighty-seven of her one hundred and five counties there are no insanse. In fifty-four of this number are no feeble-minded. Ninety-six counties have no inebriates and in the other nine they are as scarce as hens' teeth. Thirty-eight county poorhouses are as empty as a last year's locust-shell, and most of these have been so for the best part of a decade.

"The pauper population of the state falls a little short of 600. That is one pauper for each 3,000 of the kind making a living, and a good one—the kind that now own $255,000,000 worth of live stock and in the last twelve months have added more than $45,000,000 to their taxable personal property. Her own people this year hold more than $67,000,000 in this form of wealth, an increase of over 500 per cent in five years.

"At one time not long ago the jails in fifty-three counties were empty and sixty-five counties were on the roll as having no prisoners serving sentence in the penitentiary. Instead of being hampered by a large mass of illiterates—thirty years ago 49 per cent of her population came under this head—her present ratio of two per cent is next to the lowest in the land and two-thirds lower than Massachusetts, including Boston.

"It is the combination of sense and solid muscle that has kept her growing stronger and richer through extremes of climate which soon would decimate a less fit lot. These people have made good in a zone once declared to be unquestionably unproductive. In the last twenty years they have made this 'unproductive' soil yield corn and wheat worth $2,517,902,640.

"SO SOMETHING WOULD SEEM TO BE THE MATTER WITH KANSAS.

"SOMETHING IS THE MATTER WITH HER. That something we believe can be boiled down into these first fourteen words constituting an amendment made to her constitution in 1881:

"'THE MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUOR SHALL BE FOREVER PROHIBITED IN THIS STATE.'

"It is this fundamental provision fought and evaded in some localities as it was for a quarter-century, and strictly enforced in all parts of the State only within the last five years, that has helped Kansas to flaunt a two-hundred million bank-account in the face of a partial crop failure; that relieves her of spending much time, strength and money on paupers, criminals, insane and feeble-minded; that gives her people the best of chances for living and the fewest excuses for dying."

"YET WILL I REJOICE IN THE LORD!"

Though the fig-tree shall not blossom,
Though the olive's labour fail,
Though a murrain, sore and grievous,
Smite the herd on hill and dale,—
Yet my soul shall bless and praise him,
And my faith shall still prevail!

Though the earth be filled with violence,
And the Dove of Peace hath fled,
While the land and sea are groaning
'Neath the burden of their dead,—
Yet, amid the awful tumult,
I rejoice and lift my head!

Though the vision seem to tarry,
And the waiting time prolong,
Though my faith be strangely tested
In the conflict fierce and strong,
Yet his grace shall be sufficient,
And the burden of my song!

Though he slay me, I will trust him,
Though my very heart he break,
For I know with loving wisdom
He hath planned the way I take,—
Thus my dying breath shall bless him,
And I'll praise him when I wake!

—G. W. SEIBERT.

PROMOTE THE WORLD'S PEACE

[From editorial of *New York American*, Aug. 11, 1915.]

The people of this nation are either in favor of peace, or they are not. If they are in favor of peace, they should be against war, and against the supplying of arms to the nations engaged in war, when they know that those arms are to be used to increase the murder and destruction of that war. If the people of this country are not in favor of peace, then they should continue to supply arms to the murdering nations and make all the money they can out of the murder. But in that

event they should stop prating about peace. If we cannot be conscientious let us, at least, be consistent. We should cease assuming a virtue which we do not possess, and go coldly and boldly out to acquire any blood money which may be "coming our way."

We have that right under international law, but have we that right under moral law?

We have that right under the law of nations, but have we that right under the law of God?

The Lord God has said, "Thou shalt not kill." Does that mean also, "Thou shalt not help to kill?"

If it is criminal to be a murderer, is it not just as criminal to be an accessory before the fact? In the case of two accomplices in murder, is he who murders for hate any worse than he who murders for profit?

These people of ours are sincerely devoted to "principle," and they do not care whether the operation of that principle embarrasses Germany and benefits England, or whether it embarrasses England and benefits Germany, as long as it is a just and righteous principle. We are not partisan in our "principle," President Wilson. We are not pro-German or pro-British, Mr. President. We stand for abstract principle and for its concrete application in a neutral, impartial and absolutely just and righteous manner.

We speak thus directly to you, Mr. President, because we have the grateful testimony of your own words that you yourself view this matter as this newspaper views it. We find these words in your message upon the subject of Mexico, which you delivered to the Congress in August, 1913:

> "I deem it my duty to exercise the authority conferred upon me by the law of March 14, 1912, to see to it that neither side of the struggle now going on in Mexico receive any assistance from this side of the border. I shall follow the best practise of nations in the matter of neutrality by forbidding the exportation of arms and munitions of war of any kind from the United States—a policy suggested by several interesting precedents, and certainly dictated by many manifest considerations of practical expediency. We cannot in the circumstances be partisans of either party to the contest that now distracts Mexico, or constitute ourselves the virtual umpire between them."

It seems to us, Mr. President, that you could not possibly have better stated then, and could not possibly better state now, the high and solemn obligation of this country to "follow the best practise of nations in the matter of neutrality by forbidding the exportation of arms and munitions of war of any kind from the United States," not only to the Republic of Mexico but to any and to all republics, kingdoms and empires which are engaged in this dreadful and frightfully destructive war across the Atlantic.

Sir, is there any "manifest consideration of practical expediency," or any consideration of duty and of humanity which applies to the Mexican conflict that does not apply far more weightily to this other vastly greater and more deadly and destructive European conflict?

The miserable plea that some Americans are making money out of this traffic can have no more weight with you, Mr. President, than it has with the millions of your fellow citizens who abhor blood money. The suggestion that we should sell arms and munitions of war in order to make up for the gigantic losses inflicted upon our peaceful, legitimate commerce by Great Britain doubtless meets with the same disapproval from you, Mr. President, that it meets from all self-respecting American men and women. Nor do we think that you, Mr. President, attach any importance to the preposterous argument that it would be unnatural for us to discontinue the sale of arms to the warring nations, since one side could not perhaps carry on the war many more months without a steady supply of arms and munitions from this country.

NEUTRALITY, as you, of course, well know, Mr. President, DOES NOT ACTIVELY AID either belligerent to overcome the other, in any war.

INTERESTING LETTERS

LOVE SUFFERETH LONG AND IS KIND

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

For some time I have felt that I should write you about the results of THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION in this vicinity and of the strenuous opposition which this, together with our work, has brought about.

At Manchester, Iowa, a permanent class of eight or ten has been established by the service of the Dubuque elders, holding regular meetings. The Baptist minister fought every inch of the way until he met with a misfortune which prevented further action on his part. He used all kinds of methods to bring the truth and yourself into disrepute, continuing this for possibly two months, when he made a final effort for as large a crowd as possible to hear him "expose Russellism," as he termed it.

Two of our brethren "faced the music" and heard a terrific onslaught which was generally accepted by the audience, although some expressed disapproval of his language and methods. The next morning the poor man was stricken with paralysis of the face and did not preach another sermon for about three months; he is now able to talk only a very short time. Many people in Manchester and vicinity assert that this affliction was a judgment sent upon him. The Methodist minister at this place is friendly and has attended a number of our meetings.

At Warren, Ill., we rented the Orpheum Theatre. At our first exhibition the manager of the house became so enthusiastic that he went out during the progress to bring in others to hear the "good tidings of great joy." During three exhibitions the opposition was very busy, and by the time of our fourth exhibition we were refused the use of the theatre because of the pressure the local ministers brought to bear upon the owner. They also intimidated the editor of the local newspaper so that he refused our paid advertisements.

The Methodist minister here, who was the real instigator of the opposition, was so bitter that he not only made special attacks from his pulpit every Sunday, but even accosted people on the street—including the brethren from the Dubuque class, threatening to drive them from the town, etc.

We then rented a small hall owned by a man who had become much interested, but the intense opposition forced us from this place also. One of our brethren then leased the Opera House for five Sundays, paying part down and securing contract from the owner, who was friendly to the truth. The ministers turned their attacks upon this man, three of them calling at his store. He replied that we should have his Opera House as often as we wanted it, even though he should lose every dollar he had; that WE were the only people who had ever preached the Gospel in Warren. At the same time another friend offered his home for our meetings, where a class of ten or twelve meet regularly.

The Presbyterian and Baptist ministers joined the Methodist in a special sermon on the same Sunday, on "Some Facts Concerning Russellism"—word for word alike, indicating a stereotyped attack.

The owner of the Opera House attended the Methodist service and, in the midst of the attack, arose and challenged the minister to prove the things he was saying.

During all this we have endeavored to manifest a spirit of love. We have continued preaching the truth and have won the approval of all the fair-minded people of Warren, and are also recompensed by the organization of a Class of earnest Bible Students, who are rejoicing with us in the glorious prospects that await those who patiently endure.

With love to all of like precious faith, we are

Faithfully yours, THE DUBUQUE ECCLESIA.—*Iowa.*

DEATH BLOW TO CLERGY ORDINATION

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

I have today read Vol. 6, No. 8, of THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, and have been deeply impressed by the article under the heading, "Clergy Ordination Proved Fraudulent," appearing therein. The text from Isaiah, "Cry aloud, spare not; show my people their transgression," is most appropriate. I unhesitatingly agree with every word in the article.

In my opinion there is absolutely no divine authority for ecclesiastical titles. I am happy to know that such a personage as yourself is living in this age. This article of yours is, I believe, the death-blow to "Clergy Ordination"; it is bound to go to oblivion hereafter.

May you, by the grace of God, continue to expound the Scriptures in this straightforward manner for many years. With every good wish for your future happiness, I am

Yours cordially and fraternally,

A. VANIER.—*British Guiana.*

THE PROMISED ESCAPE PROVIDED

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—

Your recent letter has been read with much interest, as I had been passing through a siege of testing doubtless permitted to see if I would tolerate evil thoughts. Your kind and sympathetic letter struck the proper chord. The thought that possibly the adversary had been touching me awakened the

impulse to call at once upon our dear Lord for relief, remembering the promise of 1 Corinthians 10:13.

He has answered my prayer, has granted me release, and has given me that peace of mind which those only can know who dwell "in the secret place of the Most High."

Although this has been a very severe test, the one which I had soon after making consecration was more so. It began in thoughts of hatred toward every one I met. This continued about two days, when I commenced continually repeating the sentence, "I LOVE EVERYBODY!"

Having a very sensitive nature and an abhorrence of evil which is highly developed, it is possible that my self-examination is too critical. My daily and oft-repeated prayer is that everything not in harmony with the divine will may be rooted out of my heart, making it a fit temple of the holy Spirit.

I have never let slip an opportunity to witness for the truth, either by handing out literature or by word of mouth. This activity has resulted in my business being boycotted. I was notified that this would result if I persisted. But I rejoice in the persecution, which I experience also in my own home. It only stimulates me to further zeal for the Lord.

Again thanking you for your sympathy and brotherly love, which I appreciate more than words can express, with much love, I remain

Your brother and fellow-servant, H. C. KEITH.—*Ind.*

BRITAIN'S SOLDIERS STUDYING THE TRUTH

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY:—

I have a brother who has been twice wounded in the war. I wrote and told him some truth and sent some tracts while he was in England. (He is still there at Belfield Park, Weymouth, County Dorset.) He wrote and told me that to forgive your enemies is not in a soldier's creed, and that they must take revenge on the Germans.

I received a letter again a day or two ago, and he said he was pleased with the tracts I sent, and that he was beginning to realize the truth. He says he got some of the men to read them, and now they have a class of fourteen, and their officer has allowed them a tent for study. They sent for books to the London Tabernacle, and received them. He says their officer drops in occasionally. He asked for more tracts on the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, so I sent some, together with other tracts. I ask your prayers for these poor men, should any have the qualifications for the truth. I told my brother to write again to London Tabernacle to see if they could not get somebody to go down to teach them. It would, indeed, be well if this could be done. I pray that your good work will bring forth fruit. Pray for me!

Yours very sincerely in Christ,

EDWARD H. CLAY.—*Toronto, Can.*

FAR-OFF TASMANIA HEARD FROM

DEAR FRIEND:—

I must tell you what a blessing the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES have been to me, and what joy and peace they have given me! Although a believer for years past, yet I was dissatisfied and unwilling to consecrate myself. But now the Lord has seemed to meet me as he met the Prodigal in our Lord's parable.

The "vow unto the Lord" I have recently taken, and I would like to be baptized; I suppose, however, that none of the pilgrims visit this place, as it is isolated and the people are generally indifferent to spiritual matters. I have met but one interested person—a humble, simple woman—grieving over the loss of a child, the sorrow opening her heart to the things of God. Talking with her, she begged me to come again; she is eager to know more. I think others like her can be found here.

I should like to tell Pastor Russell fully what his books have done for me; but although I cannot do this, I do pray for him and his coworkers.

I hope soon to send a contribution for the work; I hope also that a pilgrim will make his appearance up this way. I occasionally attend a monthly religious service and would like some withdrawal letters if you will kindly send them.

Your Sister in Christ,

MRS. BLANCHE JOHNSON.—*Tasmania.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

REV. DR. GORDON'S WAR VIEWS

The "Toronto Globe" publishes the following stirring article from the pen of Rev. Charles W. Gordon. D. D., widely known under the pen-name of Ralph Connor. Rev. Gordon, as Chaplain of the Forty-third Battalion Cameron Highlanders, has returned to Canada, bringing back his wounded brother, Lieutenant A. R. Gordon. His article in the "Globe" follows:

BRITAIN SEES SPECTRE OF DEFEAT

"Every one has been dutifully saying that this war is a serious business, but no man living, not even Kitchener himself, knew till three months ago just how serious it was. Kitchener knows now. Asquith knows. Lloyd-George knows. Bonar Law knows. The labor leaders of Britain and the labor unions know just how serious, how deadly serious, this war is. And on London streets and in London offices, in the drawing rooms and at 'week-ends,' men are asking each other in whispers, questions they would not dare to ask aloud, and are getting answers that sometimes give a queer feeling at their British hearts.

"A serious business indeed is this war. The issue of it the cheerful and irresponsible optimist, with his eye on the past, when wars were waged by men and not by machines, and when valor, not explosives, won fights, declares to be assured—only one issue is possible—victory to our arms. A pleasant man this cheerful optimist, till you notice that his eye is upon the back trail or in the clouds. When you know him, you damn him for being a misleading fool . Every man in the empire that ought to be listened to sees no hope of victory, absolutely none, and little hope of a drawn battle, unless conditions be changed, so as to be utterly different from those under which the war has been hitherto waged.

"The first impression one got on reaching London, about two months ago, was that the traditional British cocksureness had been shattered and had been replaced by a paralyzing sense of uncertainty. You caught it everywhere; on the streets, in the hotels, at dinners, in the House of Commons and in the press—even in the press! It was not so much what people said, but what they refused to say. It was the determined and obvious effort to be cheerful that depressed and disturbed one. Everybody was saying to his neighbor, 'Cheer up, things will improve.'

"BLAMES WAR OFFICE FOR STATE OF THINGS

"But everybody, when by himself, refused to cheer up. He was mostly engaged during those lonely moments in blaming in his own particular way, something or somebody, and not the Germans either, but very largely those in the War Office.

"What was wrong? The fact was simply this: That the British people were standing and looking with newly-opened eyes as the spectre of defeat looming up through the channel mists; a spectre unlike the traditions of our dreams, sleeping or waking, in that it refused to disappear, and wore a shiny helmet. That spectre, unless conditions were changed, could not be laid, but would take on a reality of hideousness and permanency for their children to contemplate for successive generations. There are people doubtless reading this line who pause to say 'Rot.' But the British people are not saying 'Rot' any more, and did not say 'Rot' when their eyes were opened some two months and a half ago. Then the British people sat up broad awake, and with that superb cool courage that faces men up to unpleasant and terrible facts, looked the situation in the eye and began forthwith to change things.

"ASQUITH MET THINGS IN CHARACTERISTIC WAY

"The government showed the way. With that fine power of sacrifice which is the characteristic of the British statesman Asquith met the crisis, for crisis it was. It was a bitter, hard day for the Premier, the bitterest and hardest day of his whole career, but he was equal to the demand made upon his patriotism. A coalition government was formed. Then the housecleaning began. Among other things the War Office was reorganized. A new department was created with Lloyd-George, that wonderful, great, little man at its head. Up to this time the call had been for men, and more men. Now to the nation's ears came a new cry: "Munitions, munitions and more munitions.' That 'wonder-working little Welshman' was onto his job.

"One question still remains to be answered: 'What is to be the issue of this serious war?' The answer is plain, so plain that even the erstwhile cheerful optimist can see it. And the answer is this: If the change in conditions so splendidly initiated be not continued, and with ever-increasing acceleration, the issue is, defeat.

"APPEAL FOR MUNITIONS

"What then is the immediate duty of Canadians? To raise large sums of money? Not so much. Old John Bull may be safely trusted to look after the financing of this war. But for Canada two things lie in her hand. Listen to the insistent iteration of Lloyd-George: 'Munitions and machine guns, munitions and machine guns! Let every Canadian wheel that can turn on a shell be set a-going. Let every Canadian workman and workwoman that can get to a munition factory or gun factory get there and with all speed. Shells and more shells! Machine guns and more machine guns!

"Where British soldiers have two machine guns Germans have forty. Shells spent with prodigality—even wasted—mean battalions saved. We have tried fighting machine guns with men, and have learned our bitter lesson. Canadian shells and Canadian machine guns mean the saving of Canadian men. Seriously, soberly, solemnly let it be said, that unless the Empire can furnish in overwhelming quantities munitions of war, and in overwhelming numbers men of war, the bitterness and humiliation of defeat will be our portion, and the shame and slavery of an infamous and tyrannous militarism will be the portion of our children."

SORRY PLIGHT OF THE CLERGY

Ministers of the nominal churches are finding themselves in a tight place. They are expected to be faithful to their country, right or wrong. They are expected to preach the war as the will of God and the going to war as a meritorious matter that will have divine reward and blessing. They must encourage recruiting, in obedience to the commands of their earthly king, and in violation of the commands of the heavenly King, who has directed them to be peacemakers, and to follow peace with all men and to do no murder, either under legal sanction or otherwise.

WHEN THE MISTAKE WAS MADE

Long centuries ago a wrong step was taken by the bishops of the church in claiming that they were apostolic bishops—with apostolic powers, the same as the original twelve. Later these self-styled "apostolic bishops" (Revelation 2:2) concluded that the people need not have the Bible, and that they could simplify matters for the masses by giving them the creeds. They made their first creed in A. D. 325, and afterwards they continued to make "worse and more of it," until the Sixteenth Century. Meantime the Bible was tabooed. At one time it was almost a sure sign of heresy to be found reading the Bible; for this implied that the reader was not fully satisfied with the creeds which the "apostolic bishops" had made for the world. It was during this time that the horrible doctrines of the dark ages were introduced by our great adversary.

Then came a change, when the people began to demand the Bible and to doubt the infallibility of the "apostolic bishops" and their creeds. Early editions of the Bible were burned publicly, by both Protestant bishops and Catholic bishops, until the Bible triumphed and became too thoroughly entrenched in the minds of the people for this. The period of darkness lasted over twelve hundred years, the lamp of God's Word being absent. Then came various attempts at Bible Study, all more or less handicapped by the insistence of the bishops that the Bible must be interpreted by the creeds they had made. Nor are many out of the darkness yet. We all feel like saying, with Cardinal Newman:

"Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on;
The night is dark and I am far from home,
Lead thou me on!"

Only within the past forty years are Bible students really ignoring all creeds and going straight to the Bible itself for the light of divine truth; and correspondingly their blessing is increasing. The present great war, as everybody knows, has been held back for forty years. The Lord's object in holding it back in the past has been to favor Bible study. Thus we read: "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth . . . . and another angel . . . . cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads."—Rev. 7:1-3.

It was during that long period of darkness, when the Lamp of Truth was hidden from the people, that the "apostolic bishops" exalted themselves and separated from the remainder of the church—calling themselves the church, the hierarchy, the clergy, and denominating the masses the laity, contrary to the Master's words, "All ye are brethren," and to St. Peter's words to the whole church, "Ye are a royal priesthood."

The clergy, having exalted themselves, took another step, claiming power as well as authority. The claim went forth that the time had come for the church to reign. Accordingly, a chief bishop was named Pontiff, or Pope, and he and all of his successors were decreed to be Christ's vice-gerents—reigning over the kingdoms of the world as Christ's representatives. As such, they commissioned the various kings to rule their people in Christ's name, thus identifying the various governments of the world with the church and making a combined reign, spiritual and temporal—two parts of God's empire on earth, they claimed.

For centuries the Popes had such power that kings dared not dissent, but found it to their advantage to uphold the claim of Papacy, submitting everything to Papal direction. A king might not divorce a wife and marry another without a special dispensation from the Pope. The Pope did not respond quickly enough to the wishes of King Henry VIII. of England in respect to approval of his marriage to his second wife. Then the king broke off relations with the Papacy and started a church of his own—himself the head—authorizing and sanctioning his bishops, and giving them places in the House of Lords; they authorizing and sanctioning him, in return, as the head of the church of England. Luther did a similar work for German kings and princes, for the Swedish, Danish, Finnish, etc. The Greek Catholics, also dissenting from the Papacy, sanctionel the Russian government.

Thus we have the fact that present governments of Europe have been told by the religious systems that they are God's kingdoms—sanctioned by the Almighty through his earthly representatives—in some cases the Papacy; in some, Lutheranism; in some, the church of England; in some, the Greek church.

WHAT A TERRIBLE MUDDLE!

"But," we are told, "that is ancient history. No educated people believe those things now!" We agree to this. We doubt if King George really thinks of himself as the head of Christ's church on earth and the divinely-appointed defender of the faith. We doubt if Kaiser Wilhelm seriously thinks that he is God's special representative to Lutherans. We doubt if the Czar takes seriously his claimed relationship to Messiah's kingdom. We doubt if Francis Joseph of Hungary takes seriously the thought that he is the representative of Christ's kingdom under Papal appointment. Nevertheless the theory is there. It is in the mind of the people.

The preachers of all denominations, in tacitly accepting these conditions and not reproving them and not denying them, have in fact approved them; and they have not told the people that a great mistake was made—that Christ's kingdom has never been established in the earth, but that it is the next thing in order to be expected. Hence the people are in perplexity. German Christians are fighting as a part of Christ's kingdom against Russian Christians as a part of Christ's kingdom and against British Christians as a part of Christ's kingdom. What a terrible muddle! And who is responsible, if the preachers are not, for such ignorance, blindness, superstition?

Meantime, God's kingdom is coming, just as the Bible has foretold. The great time of trouble is about to inaugurate the new reign—Messiah's reign of righteousness. But is not this latter coming as a thief and as a snare upon the whole world? Is it not true that as the Apostle foretold, only "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief"?

Meantime also, are not the preachers of the world, Catholic and Protestant, in a terrible plight? Their forefathers told humanity that the present governments are Christ's kingdoms. These learned men, knowing well the fallacy of that teaching, have not corrected it. Now they are in the position of hypocrites. These earthly kingdoms call upon them to raise the money and the troops to defend what they have told the people is Christ's kingdom. But the Word of God calls upon them to be peacemakers instead, and to so teach the people.

The people themselves are perplexed. But we may be sure that when they come to their senses—and they soon will, in the terrible trouble coming—they will not only feel incensed against the earthly princes who got them into the war, but they will doubtless also feel incensed against the spiritual princes who deceived them into thinking that they were fighting for Messiah's kingdom—when in point of fact, they are opposing it.

The spirit of war and contention seems to be in the very air that we breathe. The attitude of all Christian people, and especially of all Bible students, should be that of peacemakers, in the home, in the shop, in the store. Let us keep our own heads cool, and thus be able to assist others to think and act coolly, calmly, in accord with the Lord's Word. Everything akin to wrath, anger, evil-speaking and bitterness should, as

the Apostle says, be put far away from us who seek to be followers of the Lamb. These same principles apply in very marked degree to our relationship with brethren in the church of Christ. With the brethren, especially, we should be very long-suffering and willing to surrender our preferences in the interests of peace, particularly where no vital principles are involved.

RESULTS OF ONE YEAR OF WAR

In the "New York American" (August 2nd) B. C. Forbes summarizes the effects of the present European War as follows:

"Look on these two pictures—what one year of war has done for Europe and what one year of peace has done for the United States:

"One year of war has cost Europe 2,600,000 of her best human stock, has maimed over 5,000,000 more and has entailed over 10,000,000 casualties among the men in the field—the 'casualties' among homes are beyond computation.

"One year of war has added $18,900,000,000 to national debts, actually, though not admittedly, bankrupting every belligerent.

"One year of war has paralyzed Europe's trade and turned some twenty millions of productive workers into twenty millions of destructive workers, while the greater part of each warring population is engaged in catering directly or indirectly to the war gods—devils, rather.

"EUROPE PROSTRATED

"One year of war has laid waste vast territories of Europe and ruined and rendered homeless perhaps fifty million human beings, to say nothing of the destruction of much of the world's most hallowed architecture.

"One year of war, in short, has prostrated and bankrupted Europe.

"One year of domestic peace amid the horrors of Europe's war has raised the United States to the forefront of the nations of the earth.

"One year of peace has won for us first place in moral influence.

"One year of peace has won for us first place in financial power.

"One year of peace has won for us first place among the industrial nations of the world.

"One year of peace has transformed us from a borrowing into a lending nation.

"One year of peace has sped us along the path toward becoming the financial center of the world.

"One year of peace has enabled us to feed and succor millions and millions of innocent, helpless victims of the war—this last not the least notable of America's achievements during the blackest year the earth has ever known. One year of peace, in short, has brought the United States an infinity of blessings, just as one year of war has brought Europe an infinity of horrors and disasters."

WILL THE UNITED STATES BECOME INVOLVED?

The article proceeds to query the future and the possibility of the United States becoming involved. How strange that such a possibility should be even considered in the light of the fact that all of the nations now at war would be glad to get out of it honorably at almost any price! The danger is seen along the lines of international laws and the rights of neutrals. Armed air craft and submarines have brought new factors into this war not considered in the laying down of rules of warfare, not dealt with in the international laws. International law provides that neutral nations and their commerce shall not be disturbed, except in the case of blockaded ports. Any ship entering such a port may be examined. If owned by the enemy, the vessel and cargo are subject to confiscation. If owned by a neutral nation, they should be exempt except as respects munitions of war.

Great Britain has violated the rights of the United States and other neutral nations in respect to these matters. She has not blockaded the ports actually, but has declared them blockaded and has seized neutral vessels anywhere on the high seas and taken them into British ports, regardless of their cargo not being contraband of war. American shippers have complained greatly of detention and loss. They are sure, however, that ultimately they will get justice—probably when the war is ended.

Great Britain excuses these violations of international law and agreement by declaring that conditions have changed, and that it is to her interest to change her mode of operation. When in the arrangement of international law she agreed to the provision that food-stuffs would be free, she had in mind the fact that she needed to import food-stuffs herself. But later, perceiving that the Germans might be starved if free shipments were not permitted, she concluded that her warfare against the Germans might be more effective if food supplies were stopped and the Germans were partly starved.

In the international agreement, cotton is not included as war material and is not subject to seizure as such. Great Britain and Germany both agreed to this, because neither produces cotton. Both purchase it from America for manufacture of clothing, hosiery, etc. However, conditions have changed to such an extent that a large portion of the ammunition used in this war is made of cotton. Hence the British refuse to allow American shipments of cotton to go to Germany, either directly or through neutral countries, and have seized cargoes of it—contrary to international law, claiming the right to do this because she has the might—the most powerful navy—and because she considers it to be necessary to her speedier crushing of Germany.

The Germans also have violated international law, to which they agreed. They have announced a blockade of British ports without having their navy blockading these ports. This is called a "paper blockade," in the sense that it is merely announced in print, just as the British have announced the German blockade in print, without having vessels actually blockading the German ports. Germany declares that new conditions (submarines and air-craft) justify her in violating the laws of nations and destroying vessels which her submarines cannot take as prizes into her ports. Her attention has been called to the fact that this jeopardizes the lives of non-combatants and neutrals and their proper pursuits. She has been asked by the United States Government to desist from this violation of law.

Germany declares that circumstances have altered cases; that it is necessary for her success and self-preservation that she shall establish a blockade against Great Britain as nearly parallel as possible to the one Great Britain has established against her; and that her only means of accomplishing this end is in the destruction of British vessels, which are carrying volunteers, arms and war munitions of various kinds to Great Britain, intended for the destruction of Germans and their homes. Germany regrets her inability under the circumstances, to follow international law, to which she has agreed, and claims justification in the fact that the British have violated the same law. Germany has agreed, however, to respect the vessels of neutrals, if assured that they do not carry munitions of war. She calls attention to the fact that she notified vessels of neutrals (in her paper blockade) to keep out of the war zone; and says that if neutrals travel on ships of the Allies their lives and property must be at their own risk.

PROPER COURSE OF UNITED STATES

Regardless of where our sympathies would naturally rest, either by our parentage or by association in life, all must admit that both parties in this great struggle are in dire straits, and therefore under great temptation to violate, as they have done, international law. But how should the United States meet the situation? Would it be the wise, the proper, thing to get into an altercation with any of these nations because of their violation of the law? If not, how can we protest effectively?

We reply that a dignified and proper course would be to refuse to have any commercial dealings with the nations at war so long as they violate the international law to which they have agreed. We believe that this would bring both of the great powers to time and put a stop to the interference with neutrals and their affairs. Why should the portion of the world that is at peace be upset and inconvenienced by those at war? It would be permitted only because the nations at war are powerful. If the breaking off of commercial dealings with the entire war zone were accomplished, and Americans and their goods were kept outside those zones, trouble would be saved, even if the warring nations did not asquiesce and give guarantee of the observance of international laws.

Business interests cry out against such a dignified course, such a fair policy. They exclaim, "This would spoil the whole business!" We have orders for hundreds of millions of dollars worth of war materials at splendid prices, and we would lose all this. Therefore the suggested policy would never do."

We admit that according to international law the people of a neutral country may privately manufacture for warring nations. We admit that such trade is profitable. Nevertheless it is a permission, and not an obligation, that subjects of neutral nations may, according to international law, thus deal with belligerent nations. But that there is no compulsion in the matter is evident from the fact that our Government has already exercised its discretion in stopping the sale of war

materials to Mexico, for instance. It has the same right, and without infringing neutrality, to stop the sale of war materials to every nation at war. Such a penalty upon the violation of international law would be, apparently, the only way of bringing belligerents to time.

Besides, our overtures to the warring nations and the prayers of many on their behalf and the sending of supplies, physicians, nurses, etc., to assist in caring for their wounded, all have the appearance of pitiable mockery in the light of the assistance we are rendering for the continuation of the war through permitting American manufacturers to sell war munitions to the warring nations, which are interfering with the rights of all neutrals and violating international law.

In any event, how foolish it would be that these United States should get into a controversy with any of the warring powers, when the whole world is witness to their folly and when they themselves are wishing most earnestly that they had kept out of the war.

We cannot appeal to our nation as a nation of Christians, along the lines of the commands of Jesus; but all consecrated children of God should remember that there are but two sides, two banners, two captains. Christians have enlisted under the banner of the Prince of Peace, who is opposing the prince of darkness, whose fall will be accomplished in the great time of revolution and anarchy which the Bible predicts will follow this war, and which, thank God! will be the doorway to the Millennial kingdom and the great blessing which will then come to the world through it. "For the elect's sake, those days [of strife and anarchy] shall be shortened"—interrupted (Matthew 24:22); for when men shall have learned the great lesson of what the outcome of selfishness would be without divine interposition, God's power through Messiah's kingdom will promptly take control; and the blessing of the Lord will cause the winds of strife to cease, as did the Master's words on Galilee cause a great calm when the storm was at its height.

Meantime, regardless of the course of the world, it is the duty of the Lord's consecrated people to preserve unbiased, neutral minds—to look at matters from God's viewpoint, as far as possible—to sympathize with all and to join with none—to stand for peace in action, in word, in thought. "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God."

THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF JESUS

It is not strange that men should question the teaching of the Bible respecting the miraculous birth of Jesus. Voltaire, Paine, Ingersoll and others have denied it. Nor do we question the right of Rev. Dr. Aked and others of today to take up the same arguments. We live in a free country. Candor in our day need not lead anybody to the stake. We rejoice in these liberties.

But we are surprised that Dr. Aked should still claim to be a Christian, and still retain the pastorate of a Christian church, while denying the very foundation of the Christian religion. Our amazement grows when we learn that after he had frankly acknowledged his unbelief he was elected to be the head of the Church Federation in San Francisco.

Think of the meaning of the votes of more than three-fourths of that Federation (78), agreeing that Jesus was not supernaturally born! Less than one-fourth of these Federationists (22) believe the fundamental doctrine of Christianity!

We can hear these learned gentlemen remonstrate, saying, Pastor Russell, you should realize that there are two Christianities in our day. We belong to the newer and larger one, which has the backing of all the colleges. We therefore have first right to the name Christian. The old view, which you uphold, has doctrines of human depravity—of a divine sentence, which must be met by the death of a perfect, sinless Savior. We "modernists" still hold to Christ, but as a great Teacher—not a Redeemer. Your old view deals with personal sin. Our newer, broader view deals with national and civic sins and their cure and a gradual evolution of the race to perfection and everlasting life—only the fittest surviving.

A RESPONSIBILITY UPON THE MINISTRY

Were numbers and influence the sole criterion by which Christianity is to be discerned, we might be forced to concede the point. But they are not. Christianity was established by Jesus and his apostles. The unbelief of few or many cannot change Christianity. If we shall prove our points, we shall hope that the seventy-eight believers in the Christianity (?) of the colleges will realize that in retaining the names of Christian and holding pastorates in Christian churches, they are sailing under false colors; and they should resign or induce their congregations to unite with them in some new name, such as "Humanitarians."

Merely to endorse a few of Jesus' teachings such as the Golden Rule, while rejecting his other teachings, would not give any one the right to the name Christian. Plato, Confucius and other sages uttered some teachings which we approve. Why not adopt their names? Is it because they are less popular in our day?

* * *

Dr. Aked admits that St. Matthew gives the line of Joseph, who adopted Jesus as his foster-child—the son of his virgin wife by divine power. He admits that St. Luke gives the genealogy of Mary, the mother of Jesus. He admits, also, that St. John's Gospel tells of the prehuman existence of Jesus.

But Dr. Aked challenges proof that Jesus himself claimed a supernatural birth. He boldly declares that St. Peter never refers to it. He exultingly points us to the Epistles of St. Paul, as not teaching that Jesus was a supernatural Person. One might suppose, when reading Dr. Aked's statement, that he fully believes and endorses all the teachings of Jesus, St. Peter and St. Paul and that if they had told of the miraculous birth he would be a hearty believer in it and an advocate of it. Let us see! Let us give Dr. Aked and his seventy-eight supporters the proof of their error and accept the Bible. "Charity hopeth all things!"

The Bible stands or falls as a whole. Its plan of salvation, made up of the teachings of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets, cannot be accepted in part and rejected in part. If Jesus and his apostles taught that he had a special birth for a special purpose, and this were not true, they were wicked deceivers. Then not one word of theirs should be accepted or trusted. To call Jesus the Great Teacher and then to say that the basis of his teaching is falsehood, is inconsistent, would imply sympathy with falsehood.

ST. PETER'S TESTIMONY

The teaching of Jesus was chiefly by induction. He had been with his disciples working miracles for probably two years before he asked them, "Whom say ye that I am?" When St. Peter declared, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus replied, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 16:15-17.

Did not St. Peter thus declare his faith that Jesus was the Son of God—not the son of Joseph? And did not Jesus approve this, and refer to the heavenly and not to an earthly father?

What did Jesus mean when he declared, "Before Abraham was, I am?" By induction he told of a pre-human existence—or he deceived! Similarly he prayed to the Father, "Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 8:58; 17:5) If he had no previous existence, but was born like others, his words were deceptive. Was the great Teacher the great deceiver?

Again Jesus told his disciples about his ascending up where he was before. If he had no previous existence, if he had not a special birth, how could we understand these words except as deceptive? Similarly Jesus referred to himself as "the bread which came down from heaven."—John 6:62; 32-35, 41.

Surely Jesus was miraculously born, or else he was the greatest and most successful of all deceivers, and therefore the worst of all deceivers. Let each take his choice. There is no middle ground.

ST. PAUL'S VIEW OF THE SUBJECT

Having heard from Jesus and from St. Peter, let us hear from St. Paul. What is the force, or significance of St. Paul's statement that Jesus is "the first-born of every creature," and that "by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . . . all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist"? (Colossians 1:15-17) These words by the Apostle are surely not in accord with the theory that Jesus began his existence the same as others—that he was the son of Joseph.

Again St. Paul writes, "Our Lord Jesus, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor." (2 Corinthians 8:9) Again he declares, "Who, existing in a form of God, counted not equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men."—Philippians 2:6, 7.

Again, what is the meaning of St. Paul's declaration that Jesus was "holy, guileless, undefiled and separate from sinners"? (Hebrews 7:26) If Jesus was the son of Joseph, he

was not separate from sinners, but belonged to the same stock with all others and would also have needed a redeemer.

ST. JOHN'S STATEMENTS

The early church all believed Jesus' declaration that he was the Son of God, whom the Father had sent into the world to be the Savior of men. (John 3:17) Indeed, this feature of the Master's teachings especially angered the Jews; for they declared that in claiming to be the Son of God he was establishing himself upon a pedestal of honor, dignity, glory, in competition with Jehovah. To this Jesus replied, "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest! because I said, I am the Son of God?"—John 10:36.

The Gospel by St. John was written later than the other Gospels, hence it was not necessary that the writer should take up the miraculous birth of Jesus. But it was eminently proper that through him God should give us a glimpse into the pre-human condition of the Savior. Mark well the particularity of the Apostle's words: "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with the God, and the Logos was a God. The same was in the beginning with the God. All things were made by him, and without him was not one thing made that was made . . . . And the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—John 1:1-14.

BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE RANSOM

Separated from the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus, the theology of the Bible would not hold together for one moment. Its claim is that the divine sentence following Adam's sin was a death sentence. The basis of that divine judgment is that no sinner is worthy of life everlasting. The six thousand years of the world's history, from Adam's time until now, demonstrate that man is unable to regain perfection, and unable to resist the curse of sin and the sentence of death—"Dying, thou shalt die."—Genesis 2:17, margin.

The teaching of the Bible is that God arranged this death sentence purposely, so as to make necessary the death of Jesus. St. Paul so declares, saying, "As by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive, every man in his own order." (1 Corinthians 15:21-23) In other words, if God had not provided a sinless Redeemer, and if that Redeemer had not died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and risen from the dead for our justification, then there would have been no future life for humanity—the death of mankind would have been like that of the brute, a hopeless one. There would have been no resurrection. Death would have been an eternal sleep.

St. Paul emphasizes this thought, declaring that if there be no resurrection of the dead, then all faith is vain, all hope is vain, all preaching, is vain. (1 Corinthians 15:13, 14) No one will question the declaration of the Scriptures that all humanity are mis-shapen in iniquity, and that in sin did our mothers conceive us. Father Adam and Mother Eve gave us, as their children, a legacy of imperfection of mind and body and of sinful tendencies. God's provision is that Christ shall make good for the transgression of the first Adam, and that eventually he shall be the second Adam, who will be successful, who will give life everlasting to all those who will exercise obedient faith in him.

BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF RESTITUTION

The first offer of everlasting life through Christ has been going out for nineteen centuries; but few have hearing ears and understanding hearts. It is to these few that the call now comes to leave the world and to become associates with Jesus in the glory, honor and immortality to which he had attained. He attained the glorious station which he now occupies, "far above angels, principalities and powers," at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as a reward for his obedience to the Father's will—obedience in coming into the world, in enduring faithfully the trials of his earthly ministry, and finally in dying a sacrificial death. St. Paul writes of him, "Who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2) The invitation of this Gospel age to all who have the hearing ear is to follow in the steps of Jesus, to become joint-sacrificers with him, and to be sharers of his heavenly glory and his Messianic kingdom.

When the church shall all have been gathered, then Messiah's kingdom will be established, for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." For a thousand years Christ and his glorified church will bless mankind, uplifting them to human perfection, mental, moral, physical. Whosoever will may then attain to the everlasting life secured for all by the sacrificial death of him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," by virtue of his special birth.

APOSTOLIC INJUNCTION NEVER SO SIGNIFICANT

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."—Romans 13:12.

From a careful study of Bible chronology it seems very evident that each of the six great Days in which Jehovah prepared the earth for man, ending with man's own creation, was a period of seven thousand years. After man was created, God "rested from all his work"—as related to the earth. His rest period began with the commencement of the great seventh day, and has continued ever since. This seventh day is also to be a period of seven thousand years, ushering in at its close the glorious Jubilee of Earth, 4,000 years after the beginning of the ordering of earth.

This great rest day of Jehovah has been man's work week, each day of which has been a thousand years long. When the Apostle Paul wrote the words of our text, more than four of these thousand-year days were in the past; they were then in the fifth day. Practically all of this time had been a reign of sin, darkness and death, due to man's fall. So St. Paul could truly say, as he looked back, that this great night of darkness was then far spent and the day was at hand. From the Old Testament prophecies and from the wonderful revelations which he himself had received from the Lord he was assured that, through the sacrifice for man which had been made by the Lord Jesus Christ, a glorious day of emancipation from the bondage of Sin and Death was to come—the seventh day of man's great week. It is of this glorious Sabbath day that the Apostle here speaks.

For one-half of the long period since the fall of our first parents, there had been but a very obscure light as regarded any deliverance of man from the curse of death pronounced upon the father of the race for his disobedience. There was the mere glimmer of a promise that God would at some future time do something for mankind. First there had been a declaration to the serpent who had brought about man's downfall, that the seed of the woman should bruise, or crush, his head, while he would but bruise the heel of this seed. Then the clothing by the Lord of the nakedness of Adam and Eve with the skins of slain animals suggested a future covering provided by the death of some unknown Redeemer—the seed of the woman. Later, God manifested his acceptance of the animal-sacrifice of Abel. A little later came a suggestion of Enoch (Jude 14-16), and still later, a promise to Abraham, that God would yet bless all the families of the earth through his seed.

Then came a gradual working out of a feature of that Promise to Abraham, through the Hebrew people, to make of them, if they would prove worthy, a nation who would be light-bearers to all other nations and peoples. Still with all the disciplinary experiences which Israel received, when our Lord Jesus came, those who had been under such special divine instruction were, as a nation, totally unready to receive him as the Messiah of God. And they crucified him. Yet they were in advance of other nations. God had not given instructions to other nations, but had given Prophets, laws, etc., to the people of Israel. (Amos 3:2) But while this especially favored nation was quite unready for the light, as represented in the Lord Jesus and his teachings, there were some among them who were ready to receive him as the Sent of God, Israel's long-looked-for Messiah. These were the "Israelites indeed."

THE CALL OF THE "BRIDE" CLASS

"He came unto his own [nation], and his own received him not." At the time of the crucifixion of Christ, after John the Baptist had done his work and after our Lord's three and a half years of ministry among them, only a little more than five hundred had become Jesus' disciples and had remained true. Yet at Pentecost and onward a considerable number were awakened, and came into the light of truth and accepted the Gospel message and received the holy Spirit. About twenty-five thousand, so far as we are able to estimate, received this transformation of heart. It is a wonderful thing that so many of that little nation were found to accept Messiah! No other nation would have made so good a showing. As history has

proven, more than 1800 years have been required to select the remainder of the 144,000 elect from among the Gentiles.

At that time the message was given forth that the Gospel call was designed to select a "bride" class, to be associated with the Messiah in his glorious kingdom. It was not designed for all, but only for those who had the ears to hear and the heart to respond. If we place ourselves back in the days of the apostles, we can think of them as preparing themselves for their great coming glory and as thinking that the foreordained number to constitute this honored company would soon be completed. They probably thought that these thousands gathered from all the Jews in Palestine and other countries, and especially when augmented by some from the Gentiles whom they perceived were later received, would make up the "little flock" which would compose the "bride" of Christ. Hence the Apostles were continually speaking as if the kingdom was at hand. They thought it imminent—were expecting it every day.

NO CLEAR CHRONOLOGY UNTIL OUR DAY

But the Apostle Paul pointed out that certain Scriptures had not yet been fulfilled, and that there must be a great falling away in the church before the great day of the Lord could come. The early church probably had no particular method in which they could have reckoned definitely the number of years since Adam. The matter of counting years, as we have it, is comparatively a modern affair. In olden times each nation had its own chronology. They merely reckoned that it was so many years since this dynasty or that dynasty began; so many years from a certain notable event to the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, of Cyrus, etc.

And so with the Israelites. They would say, In such a year of the reign of David, or of Hezekiah, etc., such and such an event took place. But it was not easy to get these things connected up so as to have any accurate chain of chronology. There were certain broken links, which our Lord has since supplied for us in the New Testament, to be noted and connected up "in due time." Today we have more advantage every way than they had. The Hebrew Scriptures were written on parchment and kept in certain places. And it was difficult to handle them because they were written on great rolls. One had to roll the parchment this way and that way to get to the place where he wished to read certain prophecies, etc. Today, not only have we Bibles neatly printed, but many of them have convenient marks of reference by which we can turn from page to page. We have suggestions, also, as to chronology which enable us to get a clear, connected chain from the creation of Adam to the present year.

It is true also that the Jews have a chronology that is called Anno Mundi—the year of the world. But it was not arranged until long after the days of the Apostles. They thought it was a long, long way back to the time of Adam. The Apostle Peter declares that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. The Jews had no means by which they could accurately reckon chronology from the beginning; no means for availing themselves of information on the subject. It is not surprising, then, that they were not clearly informed. The Lord, undoubtedly by design, left matters in this uncertain condition until his own "due time" for their revealment.

THE DAY OF CHRIST NOW ON HAND

In the days of the apostles it was truly declared by them that the day of the Lord was "at hand." The apostles perceived that a great Light had come into the world, that a turning-point in the history of the world had arrived. But it was not the shining of the Sunlight of the great Millennial day. St. Paul declared that the darkness still covered the earth and gross darkness the people. The Lord Jesus himself had explained that the light that then shone from him was not the great "Sun of Righteousness," which would later shine out upon the whole world. Neither did the disciples of Christ shed a light as the light of the sun upon the world of mankind. Our Lord told his disciples that they should put their light upon a candlestick, that it might give light to those in the house.—Matthew 5:14-16.

But it would require the light of the "Sun of Righteousness" to enlighten the whole world—Christ and his church in glory. Our Lord pointed out that this would come at the conclusion of the age then just begun—the Gospel age, as it is generally called, the Christian dispensation. At the beginning of this age he sowed the seed which would produce the "bride" class, the class which was to reign with him over the world in the age to follow. But he forewarned the enemy, Satan, would sow the seeds of error in the Lord's wheat-field, and that he would be successful in producing a large crop of tares. Our Lord also declared that at the end of this Gospel age he would himself be present and would, as the great Chief Reaper, gather the tares in bundles to be burned, and would gather the wheat into the garner. Speaking of that time the Master says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matthew 13:43.

That time has not yet fully come. But this glorious day is now breaking. The majority of the members of Christ are now with their Lord on the other side of the veil, and the dawning light is increasing, and the day will soon be here in all its glorious effulgence. This dawning light draws our attention more particularly to the chronology and helps us to see mistakes that were made in the past by those who attempted to arrange a chronology before the time was ripe for it to be seen clearly. It shows us that a mistake of a hundred and twenty years was made, and still later lesser mistakes.

Tracing the Scriptural chronology down to our day, we find that we are now living in the very dawn of the great seventh day of man's great week. This is abundantly corroborated by the events now taking place about us on every hand. The Millennial age has already begun, the day of the Lord is now on hand—now present. So we should not sleep, but should be wide awake. Some terrible things were to occur as the day of Christ drew on, before the full shining forth of the Sun. For instance, this present mighty war, which is truly a terrible thing, was long ago foretold. (Jeremiah 25:15-38; Joel 3:2, 9-16) Daily is it increasing in volume and intensity, and will soon merge into revolution, to be swiftly followed by the chaos of anarchy. The great adversary is able to put darkness for light—and these warring nations verily think they are doing God service by killing one another.

Now the question is, Will the United States become involved? This may come, or this country may receive its share of retribution in the coming revolution and anarchy. We attribute all this terrible condition to the darkness that is upon the world through the adversary's blinding delusions. But God will overrule human affairs to his own glory and to the ultimate good of man in the overthrow of the rule of selfishness and the establishment of his glorious kingdom of righteousness and love.

"Cast off the works of darkness," urges the Apostle. This injunction was appropriate in St. Paul's day. Those who saw Jesus to be the Light of the world, those who became enlightened with his Light, and themselves became burning and shining lights, were able to realize that the great darkness prevailing around them was largely the result of ignorance, superstition, misunderstanding. The whole heathen world were in gross darkness. The Jewish nation were in darkness, except the minority who received the light. What darkness were the Jews in? They were in darkness in respect to God's plan and the meaning of the promise to Abraham and his seed respecting the blessing of the world.

"THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN THE WICKED ONE"

All those who became children of the light, who received the light from the Master's teachings or from his chosen Apostles and came into covenant relationship with God through the begetting of the holy Spirit, became members of the special seed of Abraham, who are to bless the world during the incoming age. But the nation of Israel was set aside, as respects the chief favor. In the year 70 A. D., their national polity was entirely destroyed, and the Jews were scattered far and wide. What was the condition of other nations at that time? We perceive that while Israel had been in darkness, the other nations were in still deeper darkness, though many of them were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him." The god of this world has blinded the minds of those who see not. Consequently he has blinded the minds of the majority of all nations with ignorance, superstition and "doctrines of devils."

The devil has men in such a condition that they cannot think of God as being good. "The whole world lieth in the wicked one." The only ones who are not in the wicked one are the true church of God, the church of Christ. The children of the light are the only exceptions. It is from the Word of God that his true people get their light. They are to have oil in themselves—the oil of the holy Spirit. But many of these have not been faithful to the light and are in confusion; some are merely babes in Christ; some are weak in various ways for lack of the spiritual food which the Lord has provided.

It is God's people who have been addressed in the Scriptures all the way down these nineteen hundred years. We come down to our day and see that the light of the Word is fully corroborated by the work of the new dispensation now beginning. The light of the dawn is fully corroborating the Bible. St. Paul says that we should "cast off the works of darkness" and "put on the armor of light." The works of darkness are those things which are done in the dark. The works of darkness are the works of sin. These works are not

done out in the open, as a rule. They generally hide away from the revealment which the light brings. If they are done in the open, it is when they are posing as works of light. Wherever the true light of Jesus Christ comes it reproves these works of darkness.

The scribes and the Pharisees of Jesus' day were money-lovers. Jesus condemned their works because these were mere pretense. While they prayed in street corners, etc., they privately devoured widows' houses—took advantage of widows and swallowed up their property. But it was true of the public in general—of the Gentiles as well as the Jews. The apostles enumerated a number of the evils that were generally practised in his day—adultery, lasciviousness, covetousness, witchcraft, hatred, wrath, strife, heresies, evil-speaking, idolatry, etc. All these things are works of darkness, works of the flesh and of the devil; and they are still practised everywhere today.

THE ARMOR OVER THE ROBE

We are to put on the "armor of light," Consider the light you have now received—the light of the knowledge of God, of his will, of what to live for, and of what kind of characters they are to whom the Lord will be pleased to grant the reward of eternal life, even the highest form of life. Having all this knowledge, put it on as an armor to protect you. Knowing what God requires, put all this on, not as a robe, but as an armor over the robe. Put on the breastplate of righteousness covering the heart. Realize that nothing but heart-purity and absolute loyalty to God may be considered. Realize that God is for us. Take the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and all the various pieces enumerated by the Apostle. These constitute the "armor of light," so called because it is obtained from the light of truth.

In this our day it is surely as important that we should put on this armor and should put off the works of darkness as for the church of the Apostle's day. Surely if ever the whole armor was needed, it is needed now. The Lord's dealing with us is individual—both as to the putting off of the works of darkness and as to the putting on of the armor of light. All who put on this armor will find themselves in accord with the Lord and with those who are truly his. As God's faithful children get farther and farther into this day of the Lord, more and more will they see eye to eye. We believe there never was a time when so many of the Lord's people have seen eye to eye regarding the things to put off and the things to put on. We believe there never was a time when so many of the children of the light were wearing the whole armor of light. Therefore we have so much the more responsibility to "walk as children of light" and not as of the night.

DANGER TO EVEN THE FULLY CONSECRATED

It is possible that some, even of the fully consecrated children of God, surrounded with the cares of this life, or weary of the struggle against sin and evil, or somewhat beguiled by the present things of time and sense, may have become more or less drowsy, and so stand in special need of the stirring exhortation which the Apostle in this connection gives to the church—particularly appropriate today :"It is now high time to awake out of sleep!" It is time for earnest, searching self-examination, for a more diligent watching to see that we do not allow the things of this "present evil world" to absorb our thoughts and energies to the imperiling of our heavenly hopes, so soon to be realized if we remain wholly faithful to the end. It is highly important that we seek for a still closer walk with God, a more intimate fellowship with him, a more thorough self-abnegation, a more diligent cross-bearing, a more faithful conformity in every respect to the whole will of the Lord concerning us. And this will of the Lord, we know, is not unreasonable, and his grace sufficient is promised for every day, every hour, every moment!

A careful, prayerful searching of our hearts will make plain wherein we lack in conformity to the perfect will of God. And if we discover in ourselves any perverse way, we shall correct it. Thus we more and more "put on the Lord Jesus Christ"—the mind or disposition of Christ, the spirit of love and loyalty which characterized hm. How important it is, in the very short time which yet remains to us, that we fully awake and apply ourselves most diligently to the cultivation of the Godlike, Christlike disposition of love, the love which seeks above all else the glory of God, which is kindly-affectioned toward the brethren, which rests in the precious promises, which trusts fully in the dark as well as in the light, and which has no shadow of doubt that all the good things promised in God's Word shall be fulfilled!

LET US "WALK AS BECOMETH SAINTS"

In the context St. Paul urges, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." He was speaking of certain vile practises then common—drunkenness, rioting, chambering, wantonness. We are not necessarily to suppose that he meant this as a reproof to the Christian believers at Rome, but as a pastoral exhortation that they should be on guard against these sins, and as a reminder that the principles which they had adopted as Christians were in direct contrast to those which generally prevailed. Very different standards of morality were current among the heathen. Quite a large number of the believers at Rome had been heathen and accustomed to immoralities. Hence the Apostle's words were words of caution; for we would not suppose that saints would be guilty of these things.

The Apostle's words above shed a warning light in saying, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day." Most of the rioting and drunkenness is done at night—such is the custom even to this day. Works of darkness and sin thrive best at night for some reason. People have other things to attend to in the day-time, and evil-doers take the night for frivolity or carousing or crime. Vice then stalks abroad. Darkness seems to favor such works, by hiding them more or less. The Apostle points out that this is the great night of darkness, sin, but that those in Christ are not in darkness; for they have been brought into the light of God. We are looking for the full dawning of the Morning of the new dispensation—we are seeking to live in harmony with it. So here he says, Let us walk honestly, above-board, so that everybody will see and know our lives—let us be honest in every way, not be preaching one thing and practising another.

Considering the day here mentioned to be the Millennial day, we may well say that nothing in the nature of sin will then be allowed. "For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Micah 4:2) "Judgment also will I lay to the line," says Jehovah, "and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the water shall overflow the hiding-place." (Isaiah 28:17) Whoever in that day shall attempt to live riotously and in drunkenness or in any sin will be promptly punished. The Apostle's exhortation is that we, as saints of the Lord, should live as those will be living when the day shall have fully come—when the Sun of Righteousness will be shedding its beams over the whole earth.

It is a part of our overcoming to live as though the day were fully ushered in, as though everything had been fully manifested. Whoever will take the Apostle's advice in this matter will certainly have a rich blessing. In fact any other course would be sure to be disastrous to us as new creatures in Christ.

AHAB'S SIN—COVETOUSNESS, MURDER

OCTOBER 3.—1 KINGS 21.

KING AHAB'S IVORY PALACE—HE COVETED LARGER GARDENS—NABOTH REFUSED LARGE MONEY—AHAB WAS VEXED—HIS QUEEN EFFECTED NABOTH'S MURDER—GOD THROUGH ELIJAH REPROVED KING AHAB, PROMISING PUNISHMENT—MODERN APPLICATIONS AND LESSONS.

"Be sure your sin will find you out."—Numbers 32:23.

King Ahab had concluded a great war victoriously, defeating the Syrians, who had attempted an invasion of Israel's land. The fame of the king had gone abroad. He was feeling his own greatness, perhaps. Indeed, Ahab is rated as one of the great kings of Israel. Although not truly great, he had certain progressive elements of character. While King Solomon had the distinction of being the first king to have a throne of ivory, for King Ahab has been claimed the distinction of having a palace of ivory. His gorgeous palace needed a large and handsome garden. His neighbor Naboth had a vineyard adjoining, which would make the surroundings of the palace ideal.

Messengers were sent to Naboth to negotiate the purchase; and a goodly sum of money was offered for the vineyard. Naboth, within his rights, refused to sell. As the sequel shows, however, he would have been the wiser not to have stood for his full rights. The Jewish law forbade, indeed, the selling of family inheritances; but he could have given a lease for a time to the king's pleasement and to his own profit.

The Bible suggests to Christians the wisdom of being accommodating in every manner not in violation of conscience. While they have as great rights as others (or greater, perhaps, on account of being God's children), nevertheless it is

part of their covenant with the Lord that they will not live for themselves merely, but chiefly for the service of the Lord and their fellows. They are forewarned also not to expect full justice—although always to seek to give justice, in harmony with the Golden Rule, full measure pressed down. They are to realize that in taking this course they will have more and more the Lord's blessing, and that the experiences of character development under such conditions will be helpful to them as respects the coming kingdom.

QUEEN JEZEBEL FEARED NOT GOD

Of all the characters on the pages of history Queen Jezebel, Ahab's wife, stands out prominently as one of the most conscienceless. Noting that King Ahab appeared despondent, she asked the cause. On learning it she promised the king that she would give him Naboth's vineyard, and advised that he should, therefore, cheer up. Immediately she wrote letters in King Ahab's name, using his royal seal. She instructed some of the officials that on an appointed fast-day, on which the people would be in mourning to the Lord for their sins, Naboth should be given a seat of great honor. Two men were to be bribed to rise up then, suddenly in the midst of the meeting, and denounce Naboth as a slanderer of God and of the king. The rulers thereupon were to hear the evidence and to put the penalty promptly into execution. The Jewish law provided that any blasphemy against God's name should be punished by stoning. The hired witnesses promptly denounced Naboth and corroborated each other's testimony. Forthwith a company arose, and stoned the man to death outside the city.

The hypocrisy of the proceedings astounds one. The proclaiming of the fast was seemingly in honor of God's laws and his justice. The Queen's perfidy matches anything on the pages of history. The servility of the governors to her behests evidences what a low state of morals prevailed.

King Ahab seems to have been the passive beneficiary of all this wickedness. He was, nevertheless, the accountable person. His course proves that he was not truly great. Riches and station cannot make greatness, but character only can do so. The king was very willing to profit by his wife's shameful course. Upon hearing through her that Naboth was dead, he went over to look at Naboth's vineyard and to consider how it might be adapted to his purposes as a part of the palace garden.

Just as he was entering the garden he was met by Elijah, who had been sent by the Lord with a message of reproof. The king saluted the Prophet, saying, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" Elijah answered, "I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." Then he informed the king that divine judgment was that in the same place that the dogs had licked the blood of Naboth, dogs should also lick the king's blood, and that Queen Jezebel would have a similar fate.

PRESENT WAR RESULT OF SELFISHNESS

It should be remarked that at present, as in the past, God is not serving as a policeman to safeguard the world against its own fallen conditions, appetites, covetousness, etc. For six thousand years the Lord seems to have contented himself with letting mankind learn their own lessons, except so far as their course of sin might interfere with the outworking of God's great plans. In such cases the sentiment of the Lord seems to have been, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther."

Undoubtedly the permission to mankind to do great injury to themselves is a very practical way of inculcating important lessons. God seems to be bidding the angels to no longer restrain, but to let loose the four winds of heaven—to allow mankind to engage in universal strife—unhindered. The result is the most stupendous of wars, impoverishing all nations engaged therein, costing millions of lives in the flower of manhood, and entailing debts, to pay interest on which will impoverish the people for long years to come—debts which probably never can be paid. The Bible indicates that following the war will come a great revolution and that following it may be expected anarchy. The winds of strife, now let loose, may be expected to injure the world unrestrained by the Almighty until, in man's extremity, God's opportunity will come, and the kingdom of Messiah will be established for the blessing of the world.

With the establishment of God's kingdom everything will be changed. No longer will sins be permitted and the punishments follow; but instead, punishments will be inflicted upon those who attempt to do evil—before they shall have done the evil. For the Lord has promised, saying, "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [kingdom]." (Isaiah 11:9) In that glorious time all good intentions and good endeavors will have God's blessing and will bring uplift mentally, morally and physically to those participating. Thus will be fulfilled a Scripture which declares, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

THE SIN OF COVETOUSNESS

Sin and selfishness are, practically, synonymous terms. When Adam was perfect, in the image and likeness of God, he was unselfish, just, generous, kind, benevolent; for these are elements of the divine disposition, and man must have had these when in God's likeness. The first of all sins was committed by Satan. It was to forward his ambitions, selfish designs that he misrepresented the divine message, contradicted the Almighty, became the father of lies and the murderer of Adam and his race. Mother Eve's course also was prompted by an acquired selfishness. She thirsted for knowledge, which, the serpent told her, she could get by disobeying God. Father Adam's disobedience was not of ignorance, but because he believed that his life would be happier by disobeying and sharing Mother Eve's experiences.

Today, wherever we look, we can clearly trace all sin back to its fountain, selfishness. Covetousness is selfishness—sin. It is very prevalent because all are sinners. Our laws indeed seek to protect us in our just rights, yet how unsuccessful we often are in securing our rights, and in defending ourselves against those who would unjustly violate the Golden Rule.

The lesson for all is that nothing short of the Golden Rule is acceptable in God's sight from any professing to be of his children. A second lesson is that while we are to render justice and the Golden Rule's requirement to all, without exception, we are not always to demand justice, the Golden Rule, etc., from others. Rather, God's people are to consider themselves his representatives and ambassadors in a land and amongst people alienated from him and his government. The Lord's children, always just, are to be also generous and to "show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." As their heavenly Father is generous as well as just, so are his children to be partakers of his character-likeness and to be helpers in everything that makes for righteousness.

ELIJAH'S FIERY CHARIOT

OCTOBER 10.—2 KINGS 2:1-12.

ELIJAH, ELISHA AND SCHOOLS OF PROPHETS—ELIJAH'S CHARIOT AND ASCENT TYPICAL—ELIJAH AND ALL THE PROPHETS STILL SLEEP—THEY CANNOT RECEIVE THEIR REWARD UNTIL AFTER THE CHURCH HAS BEEN GLORIFIED IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION—THE TRANSFIGURATION SCENE—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ELIJAH'S JOURNEY AND FOUR STOPS—THE TYPICAL LESSON INTERESTING, PROFITABLE.

"In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."—Psalm 16:11.

Since Bible students have recognized that Elijah's life was a prophecy—that he typed, or represented, the entire church in his earthly experiences—his history has become the more interesting and the more intelligible. He was a faithful servant of God; but his greatest prophecy, that of his life, was not understood, even though the Lord declared, subsequently, "I will send you Elijah the Prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." (Malachi 4:5) This antitypical Elijah, beginning with Jesus in the flesh, has been coming and giving his message to the world for now more than eighteen centuries. We believe that the taking away of Elijah in the chariot of fire, narrated in today's lesson, is about to be fulfilled as respects the church of Christ in the flesh. Soon they shall be no more in the flesh; for the Lord will take them, will glorify them with himself. As the Apostle explains, they will meet the Lord in the air ,in the realm of spiritual control of the earth—in kingdom power and great glory.—1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Elisha had the opportunity of becoming Elijah's successor, and appears to have been guided by a proper spirit of zeal in his desire to accompany Elijah and to serve him. When Elijah was taken in the fiery chariot, his mantle bequeathed to Elisha represented that the latter had become Elijah's successor, to receive a special blessing of the Elijah spirit. While we are certain that Elijah typed the church of God in the flesh, we may not be quite so positive that Elisha was also a type and

represented a secondary class of God's people, referred to in the Bible sometimes as the "foolish virgin" class, sometimes as the servants of the bride class who will follow her, sometimes as a great company whose number no man knows, who will come through great tribulation and attain a place before the throne, failing to attain with the Elijah class a place in the throne as joint-heirs of Christ.—Matthew 25:1-13; Psalm 45: 14, 15; Revelation 7:9-17.

The sons of the prophets may also be types. If so, they would seem to represent a third class, acquainted with Elijah and Elisha, yet not particularly associated with them. The fact that the sons of the prophets discussed with Elisha the going of Elijah does not necessarily signify that they believed the matter. They knew that Elijah expected to go, but their own doubts on the subject are intimated by the fact that they subsequently made a search of the land to see if Elijah had not really fallen somewhere, dropped by the whirlwind. Their search and final conviction represent that for some time certain classes of Christian people may doubt that the church has really gone to glory, but that afterwards they are thoroughly convinced. Possibly the three days of search may be symbolic, representing three years.

ELIJAH NOT IN HEAVEN

Much of the Bible study of the past has been superficial. Certain teaching and creeds of the past being accepted as true, the Bible has been studied with a view to confirming the traditions of the past rather than to challenging their accuracy. Careful study now brings to light the fact that throughout the entire Old Testament not a word is said about anybody going to heaven—except in this case of Elijah and in the statement that "Enoch walked with God, and was not for God took him" —somewhere. The Bible indicates distinctly that no offer of heavenly life was possible until after Jesus had died as man's Redeemer. Thus the Scriptures assure us that life and immortality were brought to light through Jesus' message—nothing clear or definite was known on these subjects previously.—2 Timothy 1:10.

Jesus himself was the first to pass from earthly condition to heavenly condition by his resurrection change—"put to death in flesh, he was made alive in spirit." (1 Peter 3:18) The church has the promise of a similar glorious change, awaiting all the faithful who walk in the Master's footsteps. Their change is to come at Jesus' second advent. They as the wise virgins, as the Elijah class, will pass beyond the veil from earthly conditions to heavenly conditions. The change will be necessary to their entrance into the kingdom, for "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50) A little later, tribulations will develop the great company class, represented by Elisha. Later still, the blessing of the Lord will come upon all the human family through Messiah's kingdom.

While the Old Testament says nothing about any invitation for anybody to go to heaven, the New Testament does assure the church of a "high calling," a "heavenly calling." (Philippians 3:14; Hebrews 3:1) St. Paul points out that a different blessing has been provided by the Lord for the Gospel church than for others. Even the ancient worthies, including Abraham, the Prophet David, Elijah, Elisha, Moses, etc., cannot be of the church class, even as they could not follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Their loyalty to God and to righteousness is to be abundantly rewarded, but theirs is to be an earthly blessing in the paradise to be established by Messiah's kingdom throughout the entire earth.

St. Paul, after enumerating the worthy characters of the past, declares, "All these died in faith, not having received the things promised them, God having provided some better thing for us, that they apart from us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11:38-40) In other words, the church must receive her heavenly inheritance first; for she, as St. James declares, is the first-fruits unto God of his creatures.—James 1:18.

ON MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION

Jesus very positively declares that Elijah did not go to heaven when he said, "No man hath ascended unto heaven." (John 3:13) St. Peter corroborates this, declaring that the Prophet David had not gone to heaven, but was still in his sepulchre at Jerusalem. St. Peter thus implied that none of the prophets had gone to heaven. (Acts 2:34) Our great interest, therefore, in Elijah's experiences, lies in the fact that his literal ascent into the skies was a part of his general typical career as a pre-figure of the church in the flesh.*

Jesus gave to three of his apostles, Peter, James and John, a special vision of his coming glory. What they saw was not actuality, but a vision, as Jesus subsequently declared. (Matthew 17:9) The persons in glory were no more actual than the glories and voices and persons seen by John the Revelator. St. Peter, one of the three, declares that what they saw was a representation of Christ's coming glory. Nevertheless, he declares that the word of prophecy was still more sure than the vision. (2 Peter 1:16-21) In the vision Jesus was the central figure, Moses representing the law dispensation, which ended with Christ, and Elijah representing the Gospel dispensation, which began with Christ.

GILGAL, BETHEL, JERICHO, JORDAN

Elisha knew of Elijah's expectation of translation; and, with that in view, they had traveled to Gilgal. But the Lord did not take Elijah there, but sent him on to Bethel. Elijah's suggestion that Elisha should tarry at Gilgal implied that Elisha was discouraged and had lost faith in the journey. But no! he went on. The same thing occurred at Bethel, and they went on to Jericho. The same thing occurred at Jericho, and they went on to Jordan. Crossing the Jordan they still went on, but thereafter with no definite place in view. However, from the time they came to Jordan a multitude of the sons of the prophets, deeply interested, watched them.

Let us apply these matters antitypically to the church. Gilgal would seem to represent the beginning of the Harvest time—October, 1874. That date, prominently marked in the Bible (Daniel 12:12) was looked forward to by many Bible students with deep interest as the possible time when the church would be completed—although nothing in the Bible so declares. The inference was clearly deducible, but there was no positive statement as to the church's change being accomplished then. Some measure of disappointment was felt when expectations were not realized. Nevertheless, the Elijah class started to the next point, accompanied by so many others as were worthy of being accounted of the antitypical Elisha class.

The experiences at Bethel were very similar. The Spring of 1878 corresponded to Bethel. It was clearly seen to be the time parallel to the Lord's assuming his kingly office in the end of the Jewish age and saying to the Jewish nations, "Your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke 13:34, 35) It was not unreasonable to think of that Scripturally-marked date as the time for the church's glorification, although the Lord did not directly promise this. Nevertheless, a blessing came to all those who received their disappointment in a proper spirit.

On they went to the next date, which corresponded to Jericho; namely, 1881. Considerable interest attached to that date on the part of many Bible students because it was the parallel date to the time when the door was thrown open to the Gentiles, and Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the family of God. We assumed that this might mean a change of dispensation here, and that the glorification of the church was typed. We were mistaken in that supposition, but received great blessing and went on.

The next point of time Scripturally marked was October, 1914—the close of the Times of the Gentiles, corresponding to Jordan. Many Bible students are thoroughly convinced that the 2,520 years from Zedekiah's day to October, 1914, ended there—that that date marked the end of God's lease of world power to the Gentile nations. They are convinced that the present war is the result, and that its ultimate conclusion will be the complete overthrow of all the kingdoms of the world and the full establishment of Messiah's kingdom in the control of earth.

The Lord did not say that the church would be glorified before the conclusion of the Gentile times; yet such a thought was not an unreasonable one, in view of many Scriptures. Not disconcerted, Bible students are going on, even as Elijah and Elisha went on after crossing the Jordan. They are not, however, headed for any particular date, even as Elijah was not directed to go to any other place. Simply they went on, waiting for the Lord to fulfil his promise of taking Elijah in his own time and in his own way.

CHARIOT OF FIRE AND WHIRLWIND

It was while the two went on, with no knowledge of how far they would go, that Elijah said to Elisha, "What would you like as a reward for your faithfulness in journeying with me?" Elisha responded that he would most prefer a large measure of the Spirit of the Lord, which so notably was manifest in Elijah. The reply was that he could get this great blessing only under special conditions; namely, that he would continue faithful in co-operation until the last—until Elijah would be taken. This would be a hard matter; for, if Elisha's attention were permitted to wander, he would not get so rich a blessing.

As they two went on, behold, a chariot of fire parted them asunder! In symbolic language, this seems to signify that the Elijah class will be involved in very fiery trouble, persecu-

* For a detailed explanation of the Bible proofs that Elijah was a type of the church, address "Bible Students' Monthly, Brooklyn, N. Y."

tions, and will thus be separated from their fellows. The next symbol of a whirlwind taking Elijah to heaven also implies further trouble. Prophecies are generally understood after their fulfilment—and only vaguely before. It was thus at our Lord's first advent in respect to the prophecies then being fulfilled.

We may not hope to clearly understand in advance the full import of the fiery chariot nor of the whirlwind. To some the thought of being taken away from the present life suddenly, violently, in fiery troubles, etc., would be a terrible prospect; not so will it be with the members of the Elijah class. Waiting for their change, and living in daily readiness of heart, therefore, they go on without trepidation. On the contrary, in whatever way they shall be taken, it will be the culmination of their hopes for which they so long have waited and prayed—their deliverance.

INTERESTING LETTERS

FROM THE BATTLEFIELD OF FRANCE

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Often has it been my desire to write you of my experiences at the front, but the time has always been very limited, especially in the last weeks.

My first experience was in France, where I had copies of the French BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY sent to me. I distributed these as I had opportunity and they were received with gladness. At first the people were very much surprised that a Prussian soldier should hand them these papers, but hearing my brief explanation and after a perusal of the literature, they received it joyfully, many even offering to pay for it, which I declined.

My supply of literature having been exhausted, I was about to order more when we received instructions to break camp for transfer to the Eastern frontier—Galicia.

Sunday I was on night duty [baking dept.], therefore utilized the afternoon for a trip to the city. There I experienced much joy, for I met many Jews, to whom I could speak of their hope. I asked them if they believed all that I was telling them. "Yes," said they, "we believe it." One replied, "I thank you. We believe in a Messiah, also that the time of redemption is near at hand." Another remarked, "God will help, and it will all come about." I called on a third in his shop, where two others joined us. Much joy had come to my heart through calling on interested people, but I have never witnessed such joy as these Jews manifested. With tears in their eyes they declared, "May God grant it; may God grant it! We have already heard of it." All were rejoicing, but one who was made specially glad invited me to visit him soon again. I would have been only too glad to have done so, but on the next day our superior officer forbade us to enter the city.

A great battle is raging here; many Russians were taken prisoners. Six thousand have passed through here. Oh, what misery! One could see wounded refugees from all parts; wagons with women and children, and men driving cattle. I never saw such a sight. I am often reminded of the second Psalm. And with all these things we know it is only the beginning. Yes, thanks be unto God that these days are to be shortened! I have distributed many BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLIES amongst our troops. May the Lord add His blessing!

On our next march we passed through a battlefield. The pitiful sight reminded me of the many promises and I thanked our heavenly Father that I did not have to take an active part. What sorrow and misery sin has brought into the world, but what a blessing awaits humanity! All long for peace, and how they will rejoice when Micah 4:1-5 and Isaiah 2:4 are fulfilled! We often hear it asked, "Why is this war?"

I thank you very much for the last WATCH TOWER. The first article, "The Ministry of Angels," was a special blessing to me. The grace of our Lord be with you. Remembering you and all in fervent love before the throne of Grace, I am

Your faithful brother,

Carpathian Mts., May, 1915. W—— H——.

SOLDIERS ENTREATING FOR THE TRUTH

BELOVED IN THE LORD:—

Thank you for your letter to the brethren in the field, and for THE WATCH TOWER.

I also wish to inform you that I have repeated opportunities to discourse to my comrades. Out of 11 or 12 men there are six especially who, as often as time permits, come to me of their own accord and entreat me to give them another little discourse. When I want to close after talking two or three hours they plead, "Please continue; it is so grand." Often do I hear them say, "Why do not our preachers tell us these things? Why do they mislead us so?"

I am also frequently asked for literature. I give them THE WATCH TOWER and the sermons.

With hearty greetings, from

Your brother in Christ,

France, June, 1915. F—— K——.

A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

I wish to let you know of the great diliverance I have obtained, by God's grace, through the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, which was shown here last fall. At that time I was a believer in Theosophy and was possessed by evil spirits, being both "clairudient" and a "writing medium"; but, thank God, I am now free.

I thought I had the gift of the holy Spirit, but the sight of the picture of the Witch of Endor convinced me that I had a "familiar spirit," and when I prayed God to release me and make me his child again, he did so at once.

My husband went with me afterward to see the pictures, and we then obtained the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES. We are now fully consecrated and are rejoicing in the truth.

We feel we can never express our thankfulness, dear Brother, but we daily pray our heavenly Father to bless and guide you. It was such a wonderful deliverance that I can never forget the wonder of it, and my heart rises in gratitude to God, who could seek me when I had gone so far astray!

With best wishes from my husband and myself,

ELIZABETH PEARSON.—*Eng.*

B. S. M. IN A LETTER-BOX DID IT

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

As I am changing my place of residence and should be sorry to miss a copy of THE WATCH TOWER, I am enclosing my new address. A few months ago I was so fortunate as to find one of your papers in my letter-box, and I thank God I was interested enough to read it.

In view of the many creeds I had often asked myself, Which is the truth? Surely they cannot all be right! I thank God today that I am enjoying your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and THE TOWER. They seem more reasonable than anything I have seen. I have said to myself, At last I have found the truth, and I have not changed my mind.

E. COLBY HARRIMAN.—*Mass.*

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"AS DECEIVERS AND YET TRUE"

"Giving no offense in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed; . . . by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true."—2 Corinthians 6:3, 8.

How varied are the experiences of an active Christian—experiences of honor and of dishonor, of being well reported and evil reported, of suffering for righteousness' sake, of being called deceivers, etc.! Some may have a greater amount of publicity than do others and thus attract more attention. Some may have a wider field of service and greater opportunities than do others. But every faithful disciple of Christ will have more or less of these experiences enumerated in our text and in its context. Some will speak well of us and others will speak ill. Throughout the entire Gospel age it has ever been true that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12) Especially has this been true of these last days.

Amongst the brethren of Christ all of the Lord's saints should have honor. While none should seek for honor of the brethren, nevertheless a great deal of esteem should attach to every one who has taken the great step of full consecration to God—no matter how ignoble the person may be according to the flesh. The fact that God has begotten any one of his holy Spirit should make us wish to respect those whom the Lord has thus honored. Each of the saints, however humble, is greatly loved of our Lord Jesus; and therefore all of the children of God should take heed how they treat even the least of his little ones—their brethren.

"As deceivers, and yet true." On many occasions the great Apostle Paul was dishonored; at other times he was honored.

He had evil reports spread abroad concerning him, as well as good reports. He was considered a deceiver by many who professed to be the people of God. Yet all the while he was true to the Lord and to his people. He was considered a renegade Jew, because he was not teaching obedience to the Law Covenant as the only hope of everlasting life. He was teaching what was far superior—salvation through faith in the merit of the sacrifice of Christ; and this doctrine made the Law look inferior. Therefore his fellow Jews accused him of being unfaithful to the law of their fathers. To a Jew this was considered a great dishonor.

As a result, very evil reports of St. Paul went broadcast among the unbelieving Jews everywhere. He was branded as one of the greatest deceivers ever known. Everybody was warned against him—"Watch out for that man Paul; he is coming! Whoever will kill that fellow will do God a service and glorify his name!" "Why?" might be asked by some. "Because he is deceiving the people by telling them that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah—telling them that when they die to the Law they become alive through this man Jesus—telling them that the Law which we have had for sixteen hundred years is of no account! He is trying to draw people after that Nazarene!"

Then St. Paul was also accused of trying to draw followers after himself. Yet he was true to God in every sense of the word. He was true to the nation of Israel, to the law, and to the prophets. He was true to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was no deceiver in any sense; he was merely called a deceiver by those who were blinded by the god of this world. He seemed "as a deceiver" to his blinded Jewish brethren and to those who served false gods.

CONCESSIONS FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

The Apostle's earnest desire and endeavor was to give "no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed." The word ministry is frequently used today in reference to the clergy as a whole. The ministers, or preachers, of the churches are spoken of as the ministry; such as the Presbyterian ministry, the Methodist ministry, etc. But we think St. Paul had a broader thought; namely, that of proclaiming the true Gospel of Christ or of serving the Lord in whatever manner. He used the word in the sense of service. A minister is a servant. All who serve the Lord, whether publicly or privately, are ministers, and should endeavor to live so true a life, so honorable a life, that even though they may be called deceivers, nevertheless others will take note of their exemplary walk. Each should try to live in so inoffensive a manner that the world will call it good, proper living. Live above reproach. Give no just cause for offense. This is the Apostle's thought, that we should not give any one just reason to be offended at us.

Among the Jews, for any one to eat pork would be an offense. He would be looked down upon and not considered properly religious. In our day, the eating of pork is not condemned by many. But failure to observe Sunday as the Sabbath would be considered a violation of a divine command. We might, so far as our own consciences are concerned, do certain things; yet the ministry, the service of the truth, might be blamed for our so doing. Many are very scrupulous as to Sunday observance as the Sabbath. So, as the Apostle enjoins, we should, as children of God, be so careful in our conduct as to go to the extreme of faithfulness, wherever possible. The conscientious scruples of an individual are not to be treated lightly.

In some parts of the world it is the custom to remove the shoes before entering the house. If we were in such a locality we should conform ourselves to the general custom. We should ever be willing to adapt ourselves to the custom of those around us where we can do so without violating our conscience, if by conforming to their ways we would avoid offense or increase our influence for good. To fail to do this would be a lack of love and consideration, and hence in some manner, an injury to the Lord's cause.

JUSTIFICATION—RECKONED AND ACTUAL

To get the right focus upon the word "justification," our minds should go back to ascertain what is the difficulty with man, and why there is any need of justification by faith or any other way. We find that the necessity for justification before any man could be in accord with God lies in the fact that man had become a sinner, and that a death sentence had been pronounced upon him by God, the great Judge of the universe. Before his fall, Adam was called the son of God; but no man since Adam had been called by that name, until Jesus came. Jesus was called the Son of God because he was so born, and because he was such in his pre-human condition, before he came into the world.

Adam and his children were condemned to death because they were unworthy of life, under the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." Not only so, but sickness and mental imperfection accompanied the fulfilment of the sentence. A further part of the sentence was separation from God, alienation from God. In order for man to come back into God's favor and blessing, a sacrifice for sins was required. Until that sacrifice would be made there could be no justification, in the full sense.

The Apostle Paul pointed out that under the terms of the Mosaic Law given to Israel, the people were promised harmony with God, forgiveness of past sins, justification, if they would keep the Law. But after trying for fifteen hundred years and more, they found that they were unable to keep it; "for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" in God's sight. (Gal. 2:16) But meantime, while none were justified under the Law, because unable to keep that Law, there were some who commended themselves to God by the manifestation of a proper spirit, a spirit of faith and obedience. These we speak of as belonging to the ancient worthy class. This class includes Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Job, Moses and all the prophets, besides others not so notable. See Hebrews 11.

But the justification which came to the ancient worthies was not a justification to life. No real justification to life could come until the Redeemer had laid down the Redemption-price for sin—until Christ had died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3:18) Since Christ died for this purpose, it follows that none were brought to God until after Christ had died; for if, according to God's arrangement of "like for like," it had been possible to justify mankind by any other means, then Christ had not died. If these ancient worthies could have been justified to life by some other method, so could other people have been; and the death of Christ would not have been necessary.

JUSTIFICATION TO LIFE

What then was the particular difference between the relationship to God which was granted Abraham and all the other worthies of olden time and that which comes to us who in this age exercise faith? For the word "justification" is used of both classes; Abraham was justified by faith, and so are we—"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." But Abraham and others of previous ages, could not in a legal sense, have peace with God; for Christ had not yet come to earth and died for the sins of the world. And so the record is that Abraham was justified to friendship with God. Friendship with the Creator was one of the things which were lost when Adam sinned. Therefore man was a stranger to God, an "alien through wicked works." But God counted Abraham as his friend.

Abraham's faith was manifested by his works. His was not an empty profession of loyalty to God; he demonstrated his faith in a practical way—by his works of obedience. After his faith had been tested, he received certain promises from God. He was no longer dealt with as an enemy. But being justified to friendship with God is a different thing from being justified to life. If Abraham had been justified to life, without Christ, then neither he nor the remainder of the world would have needed a Savior at all. All could have been alike justified.

But the Scriptures assure us that there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved except the name of Jesus. Therefore if we cannot be saved except through faith in Jesus' name and in his blood, by being brought into relationship with God through him, neither could Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the prophets and other worthies have been otherwise justified. As they could not exercise faith in a Savior who had not yet come, and whose work had not been accomplished, it follows that they were never legally justified; i. e., justified to life. However, their obedience to God was tested and demonstrated, and they were treated as God's friends and made acquainted to some extent with certain features of the divine program. God said that he would not hide these things from Abraham, because he was his friend.

But there has been a curse resting upon the human race ever since the fall of Adam. There could not be a blessing of God and a curse of God upon the world at the same time; and the blessing has not yet come. Only those who are in Christ Jesus have as yet come legally from under this curse. These alone have been justified to life. Abraham was informed by the Lord that this blessing would come to mankind through his posterity, because of his great faith and implicit obedience. But Abraham was never invited to present his body a living sacrifice, as believers of this Gospel age have been invited to do. There was none prior to Jesus' time, manifestly, who could have been granted the opportunity to "follow in his steps."—1 Peter 2:21.

Jesus referred to this when he said, "there hath not arisen a greater Prophet than John the Baptist; nevertheless, I say unto you that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."—Luke 7:28.

GOD'S SERVANTS AND HIS SONS

If all in the kingdom of heaven are greater than John the Baptist, they are greater also than Enoch, Abraham, etc. Why is this? The answer is that it is not that the followers of Jesus are more worthy than John the Baptist or these others, but that the opportunity of becoming members of the house of sons has been granted only since Pentecost, and is granted to those alone who take up their cross and follow Jesus. Since he was a forerunner of this class, none could precede him. Those who may become sons are pointed out in the Gospel of St. John: "To as many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power [liberty, privilege] to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, who are begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This class are the favored ones, they have lived in the appointed time, "The acceptable time"; and the message of the Gospel has gone to these.

The Gospel did not go to Abraham in the same sense, although St. Paul says that the Gospel was preached beforehand to Abraham. We see that God first proclaimed his purpose to him. But that feature of the Gospel which is preeminently the preferential feature, Abraham did not know; for the sacrifice for sin had not yet been given. God could not justify any to life and make of them sons until after Jesus had come and prepared the way. The privilege of becoming sons of God was, then, given first in Jesus' day, to those who received him. All who had previously exercised faith were friends or servants. Israel was called a "house of servants." "Moses verily was faithful as a servant over his house, but Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the repoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. 3:1-6.

So we see the contrast between the house of servants and the house of sons, and the reason why. We are not to think of the church as being better intentioned or as being less sinful by nature than were Abraham, Isaac, Moses and the prophets; but this opportunity of sonship has come to us, and it did not come to the others, because their day was not God's "due time." It is for us, then, to avail ourselves of the great opportunity of entering the house of sons and thus become heirs of God.

JUSTIFICATION TO LIFE FOLLOWS CONSECRATION

So, then, the church were justified to life, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice. Hence they had something which God could accept. And day by day they offer themselves to God. Abraham had no merit by which he could be an acceptable offering to God; for, being a member of the fallen Adamic race, he was a sinner, and the divine arrangement was that nothing blemished could come to God's altar. But now since Christ has died, has risen again, has ascended up on high, has entered into the presence of God and made satisfaction for the church, he imputes his righteousness to us at our consecration, and our justification is made complete—we are freely justified from all things—made alive from the dead. It is ours then to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, and receive the begetting to the new nature—the divine.

Not having this full justification, neither Abraham nor any one else, up to the time of our Lord, could present his body to God as a sacrifice. So we find no preaching of this message prior to Jesus' day. We read that Christ "brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." These were not brought to light before he came. The way to life had not been opened up. To Abraham there was a dim, shadowy promise that there would some time be a blessing for all mankind; but neither life everlasting nor immortality, the highest form of life, was made clear to him. He knew simply that a blessing was coming; and he had the faith to seek to walk in harmony with God.

Seeing how wonderful are the opportunities afforded the Gospel church, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" (Hebrews 2:3) Here the Apostle is distinctly declaring where this "great salvation" began to be proclaimed. It was never made clear before. The Apostles of our Lord could proclaim a salvation from death, a salvation unto life, then offered; but those who lived prior to their time could not have proclaimed it. Jesus was the first who brought the message of salvation to us, and his words on the subject were corroborated by his apostles, who heard him.

Justification to life follows, never precedes, consecration. Consecration is the devotion of one's being to the Lord, the surrender of one's will and all to God. In connection with the church, it signifies not only the giving of one's self to God, but also his acceptance of the one thus offering himself. As it is written, "Sanctify [consecrate] yourselves, and I will sanctify [consecrate] you." During the Gospel age it has been our privilege to offer ourselves to God through Christ, who, as the great High Priest, accepts these offerings until the predestinated number is complete. Whoever is thus justified and accepted by him is acceptable to the Father; and to such a one comes the holy Spirit of the Father, begetting him to the divine nature.

During the three and a half years of our Lord's ministry, he declared to his disciples that if they would abide in him, the blessing of life should be their portion. But they had no legal standing before the Father until first Jesus had finished his sacrifice, had been raised from the dead and had ascended up to heaven, there to appear in the presence of the Father for them. Then they received the holy Spirit in begetting power, with outward demonstration. This came to them at Pentecost. They had consecrated themselves before, and Jesus had accepted them. Everything was done that could be done at that time; but everything was not up to the standard required after Jesus had appeared before God and made satisfaction for those who were to constitute his church. At Pentecost, and not until then, they were anointed of the Spirit and recognized as sons of God. This was the completion of their consecration—its result.

THE PRESENT OBJECT OF CONSECRATION

So the Scriptures inform us that God is pleased to accept in the same way all who come unto him through Christ, until the time when the last member of the foreordained number of the elect has been chosen. After that the door will be shut—not the door of mercy, but the door to the high calling to joint-heirship with Christ, offered only during the Gospel age. This is what consecration is for during the Gospel dispensation. The Father has ordained that before he will impute the merit of Christ to us, we must do our part by the dedication of ourselves to God. Only those who do this will be justified to life through Christ's imputed merit.

"If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." This is the condition. In no other way will Jesus become our Advocate. "We [the Spirit-begotten] have an Advocate with the Father." He is not the world's Advocate in any sense. He is our Advocate, the Advocate of all who come unto the Father by him. The great divine court may not be approached except by those who are authorized.

Jesus became the great High Priest by the offering up of himself. And having become the great High Priest over the house of God, he is the Advocate of all those who come into harmony with the Father. He is their Surety. As such, he has a right to make his own terms; and the terms that he has made are that he will accept as disciples only those who renounce self, and take up their cross and follow him.

We see the great mass of professed Christian people—four hundred millions of them—some of them in jail, some of them in the army, on one side or the other. The most of them are striving for wealth or for the pleasures of sense. Few are justified to life. Some may be justified partially as was Abraham. In proportion as any are trying to do right, they are justified. But in order to have life, it is necessary to have this full justification, which can come to us only after we have made a complete consecration to the Lord.—Romans 12:1.

ALL THE WORLD ARE YET HEATHEN

The heathen were not justified in Abraham's day, nor in Jesus' day; in fact, the heathen are not justified yet; and all the world are heathen, except those who have come into covenant relationship with God. The Israelites spoke of the remainder of the world sometimes as heathen, sometimes as Gentiles, sometimes as people—three different terms meaning all who were not children of Israel.

Since Christ has come among us and inaugurated the way to life through his blood, we are privileged to enter into a special covenant with God. The New Covenant is reserved for Israel and the world by and by. The special covenant which God has for the church is shown in his command, "Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) Only by sacrifice—only by giving up our will, our all—can we come into this covenant, and none can come except through the great Advocate. It is a Covenant of Sacrifice. The heathen, the world, have entered into no such Covenant of Sacrifice; therefore they cannot come into the position of sons of God. None can enter into this position without a definite knowledge of its terms and conditions.

When the Jewish Epoch had terminated and the Gospel call was extended to the Gentiles, Cornelius the Roman cen-

turion was the first to enter. We read that before Cornelius had received his call he was a just man, who feared God, who prayed always, and who gave much alms to the people. We would say that he was a very fine character. But he was a Gentile, and so had not been able to come in under the call. But now the time had come for the Gospel message to go to the Gentiles. Did the Father receive Cornelius at once? No. The Lord sent an angel to him, who said, "Thy prayers and alms have come up before Jehovah." They had been noted before, but God could not receive them until now.

And did this message to Cornelius bring him into covenant relationship with God? Oh, no! The angel of the Lord merely directed him what to do. He said, "Send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter. He lodges with one Simon, a tanner. He shall tell thee words to the saving of thyself and thy house." These words were necessary; the knowledge was indispensable. There can be no justification in ignorance. Such is not God's plan. Cornelius and his family were ready; for he had previously been a consecrated man to the best of his knowledge. St. Peter would not have known how to deal with the Gentiles; therefore God gave him a vision, a special manifestation of his will.

The case of Cornelius gives us the clue to the fact that God does not justify any Gentiles except those who come into Covenant relationship with him, and that there is no way of coming into such relationship except that way which he has appointed. The one special way for the Jew was through Moses and the Law Covenant, and thence into Christ. The method by which the Gentile may come into covenant relationship with God is by being engrafted into the "good olive tree," whose root is the Abrahamic Covenant. (Romans 11:16-22) Whoever would belong to Christ must became an Israelite, a member of the true seed of Abraham. This we do by faith in Christ, the seed, and baptism into his death. Hence we are no longer of the world. The whole world are heathen; for they are not in covenant relationship with God. They are Gentiles; and Gentiles are heathen, from the standpoint of the Scriptures.

"THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD"

All the families of the earth shall yet be blessed and enlightened, through Abraham's seed, which seed is Christ. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." We have not yet blessed the world; we have not yet judged the world; for we are not yet instructed to do so. But the Apostle Paul said, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Corinthians 6:2, 3) It is not while we are in the flesh, but after our glorification in the first resurrection, that we are to be judges.

So, then, God has appointed a great Day of Judgment for the world (Acts 17:31; Psalm 96:9-13; 98:1-9; Acts 15:13-18); and the saints are to be the judges with Christ. The world are still condemned in Adam. They are yet to have justification—"whosoever will"—and the ground-work of that justification is to be laid, first of all, in that New Covenant which Christ will make with Israel as the result of his sacrifice on Calvary. It will be exactly like the old Law Covenant, except that it will have a better Mediator—The Christ, Head and body. As the old Law Covenant was established on the basis of the typical sacrifices, so the New Covenant is to be established on the basis of the "better sacrifices." The work of the Gospel age has been the offering of the better sacrifices than bulls and goats—Jesus, the Head, and the church, his body members, associated with him as parts of these "better sacrifices." He will have completed all the sacrificing when the last member of his body shall have passed "within the veil." Then the opportunity to follow in Jesus' steps will no longer be given; for there is only a definite number to become the Priesthood. These will have part in his resurrection, the chief resurrection. Speaking of these the Apostle says, "We must all be changed"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-54) When this class shall have inherited the kingdom, they will be prepared to do the work of judging the world.

THE WORK OF THE NEXT AGE

Immediately after satisfaction is made to justice for the sins of the world, all mankind will be turned over to the one who bought them. Then justice will have no more to do with them; for they will be in the hands of Christ. He will then be the Life-giver, the Judge, the King. During his Millennial reign his work will be the awakening and the uplifting of all for whom he died. The opportunity will be given to all to come into harmony with the Lord, of devoting themselves to his service. The reward for their so doing will be everlasting life and full perfection of being on the human plane. Those who thus devote themselves will rise out of degradation to full perfection. Their perfecting will be their justification; for this means to be made right.

The difference between the justification to which the world will attain and that of the church now, is that with the church it is a justification by faith, a reckoned justification, attained instantly, by the imputation of the merit of Christ; while the justification of the world will be by works—it will be a making right actually, and actual perfection. But there will be no justification without faith and heart loyalty, either now or then. Under the Lord's present arrangement also it is important that there shall be perfect works. The new creature is actually just, perfect; and the Father imputes to our imperfect bodies the merit of Jesus and counts us dead according to the imperfect flesh. Thus our imperfect works are counted, through Christ, as perfect. The perfect new creature, from its small beginning, is gradually to grow and develop to maturity, using the fleshly body as its servant.

With the world it will be different. Theirs will be a work of gradually coming to a condition of justification, of perfection of mind and body, under the cover of the New Covenant, sealed with the blood of Christ. They will be coming nearer to this perfection day by day and year by year, rising toward perfection. When they shall have reached that pinnacle they will be fully justified, or fully made just; and if they pass faithfully their final test, after the close of the Millennial age, the reward of everlasting life will be given them. But the dead of the world will not live, from God's standpoint, until the close of that age, when Christ shall have finished his Mediatorial work. Meantime, those who will not come into accord with God's arrangement will die the second death; they will be destroyed as "natural brute beasts."—2 Peter 2:12.

The second death is like the first death, only that it will be instantaneous; it will not be for the father's sin, but for the individual's own sin; and it will be eternal. There will be no redemption from it, as from the first death. "Christ dieth no more." The reward of the righteous will be everlasting life; none will be granted it until they have been fully tested and proven. Therefore God can guarantee that thenceforth there will be no more crying or sighing or dying forever; for all will be fully in accord with him.

We believe that the time for the world's trial will soon come; but we do not think that the door of the kingdom is yet closed. Of course we have no special information on the subject; for the Lord does not say that the door to the high calling will close as soon as the times of the Gentiles are ended. The door will be closed when the last member of the body of Christ shall have been gathered, shall have been found faithful, shall have finished his course and passed beyond the veil. "Those who were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." It will be closed then; for none thereafter can be added to that elect number. We believe that this time is not far distant.

THE TWO GREAT INTERCESSIONS

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—**Hebrews 7:25.**

St. Paul is here contrasting the great Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ with that of the Aaronic law. He is pointing out to the believing Hebrews the difference between these two priesthoods; for the Jews had difficulty in understanding how there could be a change of priesthood. Their priesthood had stood for sixteen hundred years. It seemed neither right nor reasonable that any should say that God's institution of the law arrangement was not designed to be lasting. It was necessary, therefore, that St. Peter should deal with the matter extensively. Throughout the entire book of Hebrews he is seeking to point out that the Aaronic priesthood was merely typical, merely a one-sided priesthood. The great antitypical priest was to be not only a sacrificing, but also a reigning priest. He was to have a great work beyond the time of sacrificing. He was the antitype of Aaron, but his priesthood was of an order entirely different—much superior in every way.

This great priest, when enthroned in glory, was designed to be after the order of Melchizedek. He was not to be after the order of Aaron. The Apostle pointed out that of this glorious priest it was prophesied (Psalm 110:4), "Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek"—a priest upon his throne.

Those various sacrifices which the Aaronic order offered year by year were only types of the "better sacrifices." (Hebrews 9:23) The typical priest offered first for his own sins, then for the sins of all the people. (Leviticus 9:7, 8, 15; 16:11, 14, 15) So the great antitypical priest offers first a sacrifice for himself (the members of his body), then for the sins of the whole world. The blood which was offered in the typical sacrifices was the blood of bulls and goats; the blood of "better sacrifices" is the blood of The Christ, Head and body, which has been in process of shedding all down through the Gospel age. But it is the merit of the blood of Jesus, the Head of the body, which gives virtue to the sacrifices of the body.

"ABLE TO SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST"

The Apostle shows that the sacrifices of the typical priests were efficacious for only a year; that they needed to be offered every year; and that the priests of the Aaronic order were not suffered to continue in their office, by reason of their death. But the great antitypical Priest is to continue always. He will never have a successor; for he "ever liveth." He is to accomplish all his great work and then sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He will never again need to sacrifice, to die for sin; for he will have done this effectually, once for all.

Furthermore, the Apostle, in considering the work accomplished by this great priest for all the people, shows how much more efficient his work is than that of the earthly priest. The priests of the Aaronic order, the Levitical priesthood, could not properly sympathize with the people, nor were their sacrifices able to really take away sin. (Hebrews 2:17, 18; 4:15; 10:4) But this great antitypical priest, whose priesthood is continual, is not only able to take away sin, but is able to sympathize fully with those for whom his "better sacrifices" have been made. "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He is able to save fully, completely, eternally.

This text may be understood to apply to the church now, that the Lord not only saves us from the sins that are past—when first we accepted Christ, had our sins forgiven and were accepted by him—but throughout our course he also covers with the robe of his merit those blemishes and weaknesses which result from the imperfection of our human body. Whatever could be shown to be unintentional would be canceled by the merit of his sacrifice, stripes being administered for the expiation of any measure of wilfulness. So he is able to save, not only from sins past and present, but from sins future—save to the uttermost, and bring us to the divine favor which God has promised to the faithful footstep followers of Jesus.

INTERCESSION FOR THE WORLD OF MANKIND

But this work for the church is not all that was meant, we think, by the Apostle. If the intercession of Jesus, the great High Priest, were all in the past, and if only the church of the first-borns were to be benefited by this intercession, all the remainder of the world would be left out. We are not to think of Jesus as interceding for his people over and over every day; but there are two general intercessions. The first he made when he presented the merit of his sacrifice in the Most Holy (heaven itself) for this who would become his during the Gospel age, and its effects have been applicable throughout the entire age. All who become of the church class come in under the efficacy of this intercession which was provided for at the beginning of the age. His merit ever avails for them before the Father. He ever lives as our great Advocate, because of the work done for us when atonement was made in the presence of God.—Hebrews 9:24.

But Jesus is to make another intercession. This is pointed out in the 2d Psalm: "Ask of me [Jehovah], and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Jesus is to intercede for the heathen, the Gentiles, all who are not now members of the household of faith. See also Romans 11:17-24.

The same merit which has all through the present age been efficacious for the church class is to be efficacious for the whole world, those in their graves as well as those now having a measure of life. It will be a final or complete intercession, an intercession to the uttermost. It will not leave out even one human being.

During the Millennium our Lord Jesus will not be making intercession for the world; for he will do this at its beginning, when he applies his merit for "all the people," when the New Covenant is sealed. The Father will have no direct dealings with mankind until the close of the thousand years, but will deal with them only through the Son. During the Messianic reign, Christ and the church will do a restitution work for all mankind. Because of the presentation of our Lord's merit on their behalf, the whole world will be in Christ's hands to be dealt with to a completion, to the uttermost, to leave nothing undone that can be done. At the close of that age, all the incorrigible will have been destroyed, and those brought to perfection will be turned over to the father for a thorough testing. All who then fail, who prove not to be fully loyal at heart, will likewise be destroyed, "cut off from amongst the people."

OVERCOMING DESIRES FOR EARTHLY THINGS

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9:27.

The Apostle Paul is here using the illustration of a racecourse. In certain races there are what are called handicaps; that is, one who is weaker is given a certain allowance of time in starting, and is granted a victory if he gets in on time. That would be an accommodation for only a few. It is called a handicap from the standpoint of the others. But in the Christian race there is accommodation granted to all; for there is none perfect—all come short of the glory of God, and we could never gain any reward that God has offered, had it not been for the satisfaction which the Redeemer has made.

Yet it is also true in this race that some have more allowance than others. Those who have many weaknesses have a corresponding allowance of grace made for them; and those who have fewer weaknesses have a less allowance. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly," said St. Paul. He was fully determined. He had a definite goal in view, and meant to win. This is the only attitude, if we would gain the prize that God has offered us; and the whole matter is dependent upon our zeal, our faithfulness and our earnestness.

The Greek games had other exhibitions of strength and agility besides racing. There were contests with wild animals, in which a man would attempt to slay an animal. Then there were others between men, in which a man would attempt to deal his antagonist a fatal blow, if possible, with his brass knuckles. In preparation for this contest, the contestants had a wind bag to practise on. But this was not the real battle, it was merely the preparation.

So the Apostle says that he was not using his strength merely in practise. He was trying to do something. He was fighting a real battle. What battle was it? The answer of the Bible is that a great battle began away back in the days when Satan became the adversary of God. Our first parents came into slavery to Satan, and later some of the angels fell. Now many are fighting, and some are thoroughly ignorant of whose side they are fighting for. Those who are fighting for unrighteousness are on Satan's side. Whoever is fighting for moral reforms, etc., is on God's side, rather than the side of the enemy of mankind.

The world are fighting more or less—some more intelligently, some less intelligently. There are in every army some who could not tell you what the fight is about. So now, many do not know that a battle is being waged between Righteousness and Sin. The millionaires have their own battles and contentions; and the little store-keepers have their battles, in competition with the larger merchants. The attorney has his battles. He may sometimes take a case that is on the side of justice, and defend it with zeal; and again he may take a case that is on the side of injustice, and prosecute it with equal zeal. But the world do not recognize the real battle. The same man may be on the right side one day, and on the wrong side the next day.

The Apostle had enlisted under the true banner. Christ lifted up a standard in opposition to Satan, and he will yet win a glorious victory on the very field where sin has reigned for six thousand years. He had a personal conflict with the powers of darkness, in which he was victor. And his victory was gained by his overcoming his own natural desires, and fully submitting himself to the will of God. This was the only condition on which he could be exalted from the earthly state, to the glories of the divine nature. He has met the required condition, of dying the Just for the unjust, and has gotten the great victory over Satan.

The heavenly Father, in harmony with his own arrangement, has empowered the Lord Jesus to take out from the world a company to lay down their lives with himself, during a time when everything seems contrary, when evil seems to triumph

more frequently than do righteousness and justice. These, walking by faith, and not by sight, are to lay down their lives for the sake of righteousness, to carry out the purposes of God.

OUR PRIMARY BATTLE IS WITH SELF

Do we ask, Whom, or what, shall we fight? The answer is that one would not enter the real conflict at all, if he should follow the impulses of his own mind. In such case he would not have any part in this fight. He might engage in the ordinary battling of the world—sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong. But if he would get into this company which is being guided by Jesus, he must come unto God by him, and must sacrifice earthly hopes, aims, and ambitions, and walk in Jesus' footsteps—steps of suffering unto death. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10) Thus the battle begins in our mind, our will. We submit our mind to the mind of Christ.

In the typical Day of Atonement sacrifices, the body of Christ is represented by the Lord's goat. And as the high priest killed the goat in the type, so in the antitype the animal nature is to be killed, slaughtered, sacrificed. It is not to be yielded up to sin, but to be overcome. The new creature is in mortal combat with entrenched sin, and the cravings of human nature. He has made a consecration of himself to God. As a result, the Advocate has placed his own merit upon the consecrated one. When this is done, the battle immediately begins, that the new creature may keep down the old creature, the old will.—Galatians 5:17.

The Apostle says, "I keep my body under, . . . lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." It must be a real battle, a real conflict; for the victory is only to those who overcome. "To him that overcometh . . . will I give power over the nations"; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21.

This battle, then, that begins at the time of our consecration, continues until the end—our death. It will be the death either of the new creature or of the old creature. So far as our earthly interests are concerned, we sacrifice them fully—we exchange them for the opportunity of gaining glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship with the Lord, participation in the divine nature. So, as the Apostle suggests, we are not to be expending our strength merely on a bag of wind, but we are to fight to some purpose.

"For me to live is Christ," says the Apostle; and for me to lose in this battle is for me to perish as a new creature, and this means that the second death would be mine. We should realize that in our position as Christians our eternal interests are at stake. We fear of losing the eternal life, which we should surely lose if we fail to be overcomers.

The Apostle Peter writes, "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; . . . that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless!" (2 Peter 3:11, 14) With this anticipation, how serious life should be!

The Christian who knows about these things of the future, and who lives in anticipation of them, has a joy and a peace of which the world knows nothing. One week of such living is worth more than an entire lifetime with only such things as the world has to offer. And if now we enjoy living the new life, and entering by faith into the things that the Lord has in reservation for us, what will be the realization! If we would lose much in the present time by losing our hope and faith, what would it be to lose these things eternally!

As we realize this, we see that we cannot afford one moment of carelessness. The man engaged in combat with the animal knows that the bruised and wounded animal seeks to kill him. So the Apostle tells us, the old nature strives to kill the new nature. Therefore the new nature must see to it that it uses all its strength to gain the victory. The Lord has promised us grace sufficient for every time of need. If we are overcome by the old nature, it will be because we have not strength sufficient for the victory; for if we call upon the Lord he will sustain us. But the Lord will test our loyalty, our faith, our strength of character, our alertness of mind. And the victory is sure, so long as our trust is in him!

THE CHRIST PERFECTED BY SUFFERING

"Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."—1 Pet. 4:13.

It might at first seem strange to God's people that they should suffer special trials and difficulties as a result of becoming children of God and doers of that which is good. The natural expectation would be that he who sins shall suffer, and he who seeks to avoid sin shall be blessed. This is a natural law, and it will operate in due time—during the Millennial reign of our Lord. Evil-doers shall suffer stripes, and if found persistent, shall be cut off in the second death. But all well-doers shall be rewarded with everlasting life and blessing forever.

This is not true now, however, for the reign of the Prince of Righteousness has not yet begun. We are under the reign of the prince of darkness. And the evil-doers often have great success, while the right-doers suffer. David says of the wicked, "Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish." (Psa. 73:7) Nevertheless he took his stand with those who would please God—and so also do we.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN TESTING US

St. Paul, speaking concerning the church of the Gospel age, says, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12) There is no exception to this rule; and the knowledge and expectation of this should make us stand fast, having on the breastplate of righteousness, and having our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace.

God allows his people to have these experiences and to suffer for right-doing. In the present time he is calling out a saintly company. This company will be the royal priesthood of the future, to bless all the world during Messiah's reign. And the Bible explains to us that these need trials to prove and test their characters.

God wishes to see how loyal we are to the principles of righteousness. How much are we willing to suffer? It is a saying with the world, "Every man has his price." And so in the church there are some who would endure a certain amount and then back down. Others will endure a little more, and others still a little more. The Lord declares that he is seeking those who will give up everything in order to prove faithful to their covenant with him. This faithfulness means entire loyalty to God, to his laws, which are the laws of righteousness.

THE FIRE TO BURN AMONGST YOU

The intimation that these fiery trials will try the church, will burn amongst God's people, does not necessarily mean that all the fiery trials will come from the church; but that these trials constitute a fire that is do a purifying work amongst them, burning in their midst. It is an experience that must be endured by each one individually. It will be a general experience, because each one must have a share in this matter. It is not merely that the company as a whole will have opposition against them, but that each individual will be personally exposed to the fiery trials. Therefore this fire burns in our midst and will burn to the end.

It is a different kind of trial from what could come to any other body of people. The explanation of this difference is in our text—"inasmuch as we are made partakers of Christ's sufferings." When we know that each member of the body of Christ must be tried, we can rejoice when some of this fire touches us. We say, "I am having a share in the sufferings of Christ. I am glad that in God's providence I have a share in these trials; for if I had no share in them, how could I know that I am one of the body members?"

THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF TROUBLE

So we all rejoice, knowing that these fiery trials are of the Lord. Not that the Lord is the cause of these fiery trials; for usually it is the adversary. But we have put ourselves into the Lord's hands, and he has promised to supervise all that concerns us. Therefore, whatever comes to us, we may be sure that it is of the Father's purpose, or permission for our good. If, therefore, we recognize that this is something that the Lord's providence has arranged for us, it is all right, no matter how frequently we have to go to the throne of grace for help in time of need.

God has revealed to us that he purposes to give to The Christ very great exaltation, great glory, honor and immortality. Therefore we are looking forward to the time when this body shall be perfected, and we shall share in the glory of our Head. When the glory shall be revealed, we shall be glad with a great joy! These trials that come to us are from a variety of sources. In our context they are spoken of as the one trial of the church, but that one trial is made up of a variety of experiences. If these difficulties and trials came all at once, they might be too severe for us. Therefore the Lord permits us to be taken out of the fire for a little while. "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust."—Psa. 103:14.

TORTURES OF TODAY MORE REFINED

And so the Father has arranged that we shall have little seasons of refreshment between times, so that when the next trying experience comes, it will find us a little stronger and more ready to profit by it. Some of these trials come from the adversary himself. Apparently the things that have been done to the church could come from none other. Think of the devilish disposition manifested toward our Lord, and reflect upon his sufferings. We cannot think that mankind under any ordinary conditions could ever have had so malicious a spirit as that manifested against him. The devil had to do with all the wicked persecutions of the saints—the cutting out of tongues, the racking of their poor bodies, and the shooting out of bitter words from the tongue.

We are more used to this latter form of persecution today than in olden times; for the world—the average man—would not permit the things done in the dark ages. But the wicked feelings are there—the animosity, the gall. As the Apostle James says, the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, and it sets on fire the course of nature. (James 3:6) And so in our day the tongue and the pen are often used as weapons of evil.

We have all noticed, perhaps, how willing the world is to speak evil and to believe evil—how willing to say that which they do not know. This is all because they are obsessed, besieged by the adversary. But we are living in a more civilized day than were our brethren of the past. We think the individual who does these wicked things today—who slanders and vilifies God's people—is under some malevolent influence. And then the temptation comes to us to speak evil of them in return—to do all the harm we can against them. If we find this disposition to speak evil arising within us, we are to resist it, to allow the fire of this time to burn up these elements of our old nature. And the fire will have this purifying effect upon us, if we receive it aright, making us meet for the heavenly kingdom.

SECONDARY SOURCE OF TRIAL

Not only from the adversary do these trials come, but they come from the weaknesses and imperfections of others. And perhaps those that come from the brethren are the most difficult to bear. We know that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." But when it comes to those who have made a profession of loyalty to God, and who have named the name of Christ, whether they be Presbyterians or Episcopalians, Baptists or Congregationalists, or those who are Bible Students—if in any one of these we find the persecuting spirit, we are more discouraged and less likely to have the proper sympathy for them.

We are to remember, however, that nothing can happen to us unless the Father permits it. If we did not get the trials from Methodists or Presbyterians or Bible Students, we would get them from somewhere else, in order to burn up our dross and strengthen the elements of our character which need development. We are to take all of these things patiently, knowing that they are working out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." We are to look away from these things and to recognize the grand purpose of God. We are to reflect that this is the way in which God is chiseling us and polishing us to make us ready for the grand temple of glory. And when we think of this, we can look with fortitude and patience on these fiery trials, recognizing that we shall get a blessing out of them.

"Through many a thorny path he leads
My tired feet;
Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet
To know that he is close to me—
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied."

Thus we learn as people of God to glory. We may glory in all the things which he has done for us and in us. The things that naturally would be least likely to be gloried in are tribulations, persecutions. But we may glory also in these. We may rejoice in them—not that we enjoy the tribulations, the persecutions, but we realize that these are working for us characters pleasing to God. The Lord will see to it that we get enough, and not too much, tribulation.

The word tribulation has the thought of serious trouble—a combination of troubles that makes the experiences serious. It would not mean that we would fall into some difficulty and soon get out again, but it would mean severe and continued troubles. Sometimes we cannot see why we have the troubles that come to us. They may come in the form of sickness, or death, or financial trouble, or humiliation of our unrecognized pride and self-love; or we may have a combination of trouble. There is no difference whether it is one kind or the other—they are tribulations. But it is for us to recognize that in all these trials the Lord makes them work for our good.

The world has persecutions of a certain sort. People in business will sometimes persecute one another. Sometimes persecutions are in a political way. The Lord indicates to the church that we may rejoice in any persecution, especially if we are in no way blame-worthy. "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed [feel disgraced]," said the Apostle. (1 Peter 4:14-16) He is suffering because the "darkness hateth the light," and slanders the truth. This has been so from Jesus' time all the way down.

BLESSING RESULTING FROM PERSECUTION

Shall we say that we will not be reconciled to any certain experience? No; we have committed all to the Lord, and it is for us to bow in full submission, knowing by faith and from the assurance of God's Word that all things are working together for good to us. No matter what the trouble may be, it will bring patience if we are rightly exercised. Some of the Lord's people may have patience well developed, and thus not need so many of these experiences. But whatever we need, we should desire.

We remind you again of the story of a certain brother who took account of his qualities, and decided that he was most lacking in patience. Then he prayed most earnestly to the Lord to give him more patience. He kept on praying; and the more he prayed, the more difficulties he seemed to have, the greater trials of patience. Then it occurred to him that this was the answer to his prayer; for that was the way to get patience. And when he began to see the matter aright, it encouraged him and made a great change. He saw that the Lord was answering his prayer by giving him the very experiences he needed to develop in his character this grace of the Spirit.

"Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience, and experience, hope." This does not mean we get all of our patience first, then all of our experience, and then all of our hope; but that they are all developing together. We have a good courage and are desirous of pleasing the Lord; we are not ashamed to be his children. And the reason why we are not ashamed is that with this hope, we have the realization of God's love; and we are able to say, "If I had tribulation, I now have more hope and more patience. I am getting the results in these tribulations, in the fruits of the Spirit." Whoever escapes experiences that would develop the fruits of the holy Spirit will never gain a place in the kingdom.

Patience can be gained only by trials. Faith can be developed only by necessities. We have need of preparation for our future work. This can be gained only by those experiences which will touch us with a feeling of the infirmities and difficulties and trials of the groaning creation to whom we shall be ministers and representatives when we reach the throne. For us, then, the lesson of present experiences is to resist evil; not with evil, but with good. "Be not overcome of evil; but resist evil with good."—Romans 12:21.

ELISHA'S RESTITUTION MINISTRY

OCTOBER 17—2 KINGS 4, 5.

ELISHA SUCCEEDS ELIJAH—THE TYPICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS—HEALS THE SPRING OF WATER—ENCOUNTERS YOUNG HOODLUMS—PRONOUNCES SENTENCE AGAINST THEM—THEIR PENALTY—REWARDS FAITH OF A WIDOW—HEALS GENERAL NAAMAN'S LEPROSY—IS CONSULTED RESPECTING NAAMAN'S FUTURE.

"I am Jehovah that healeth thee."—Exodus 15:26.

For more than six thousand years our earth has been under a divine condemnation because of Father Adam's sin and its propagation through his posterity, and because of God's sentence against sin. For these reasons, as the Apostle declares, our world has been under a "reign of Sin and Death." (Romans 5:14-19) And it still is; for the curse, or penalty, has not yet been lifted. Thank God, the Bible abounds with precious promises that a better day is soon to dawn! That glorious epoch is to be inaugurated by Messiah's kingdom, for which Jesus taught his people to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, even at it is done in heaven." Then will come a glorious change to the world. Satan shall be bound

for a thousand years. The reign of Sin and Death will cease, and a reign of Righteousness and Life will begin.

That reign is to last a thousand years. We have the words of Jesus himself that its result will be the entire removal of the curse—the freeing of mankind from every difficulty and ailment which came upon the world as a penalty for Father Adam's sin, etc. From the very beginning of Messiah's reign God's blessing will begin to come to the world through him, and correspondingly the curse will fade away; but the full blessing will not be here, and the curse will not be entirely removed, until about the close of the Millennium. It will be a grand work. The promise of Jesus is that eventually there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; for the former things of sin and death will have passed away and he will have made all things new, as the great King of kings and Lord of lords.—Revelation 21:4, 5; 19:16; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54.

ELISHA'S WORK A TYPE OF RESTITUTION BLESSINGS

In a previous lesson we pointed out that Bible students understand Elijah's career to have been typical of the experiences of the church in the flesh, ending with glorification. Approximately we might expect that Elisha, the companion of Elijah, upon whom fell Elijah's mantle of power and authority as the Lord's representative, prefigured a class. Our thought is that he typified two classes; first, that he typified those who now are associated with the Elijah class; and that, after the taking of Elijah and his recrossing Jordan, he became a type of those in whose charge will be the dispensing of Restitution blessings during the Millennium. Let us notice a few of his figurative doings.

PURE WATER—PURE TRUTH

(1) A certain stream carried brackish water through an otherwise favored district. Elisha took a handful of salt, went to the head of the brook and poured it in there, commanding in the name of the Lord that it should henceforth be pure water. Looking for a typical significance of this in the Millennium, we remember that a stream of water represents a stream of truth, and that brackish water would represent impure doctrines. A purification of the stream at its foundation would well represent what the Lord has promised through the Prophet respecting Messiah's day. "They will I turn unto the people a pure message, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."—Zeph. 3:9.

The salt cast into the spring reminds us of the Master's words respecting his true followers, "Ye are the salt of the earth." (Matthew 5:13) It will be in and through the glorified salt of the earth that the blessing will come, the streams of truth for human refreshment for a thousand years. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God will be made to fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep.—Isaiah 11:9; Hab. 2:14.

HURT FIGHTING BEARS

(2) As Elisha proceeded on his journey, some young hoodlums accosted him, saying, "Go up, thou bald head!" These were youths—not children, not babies. Elisha turned and pronounced upon them a punishment, translated in our text a curse. He denounced their conduct as wrong and declared that it would have a punishment. The punishment came speedily. Two she-bears came upon them and tore them, wounded them. There is no suggestion that the bears ate them or killed them; but the forty-two young ruffians all experienced wounds from their conflict with the bears, and this apparently was the punishment for their wrong-doing.

After some such manner there will be judgments in the world during the Millennium—punishments for every wrong course, rewards for every right deed. Thus, through chastisements, called in the Bible judgments, the world will be taught right and wrong for a thousand years. As it is written, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9) It is for this reason that the Millennial age is called the world's day of judgment. St. Peter explains that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years. (2 Peter 3:8) St. Peter tells us that "God hath appointed a Day [a thousand years], in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) The judgment will be in the nature of rewards and punishments wisely administered, that the people may learn righteousness and abhor sin.

OIL ACCORDING TO HER FAITH

(3) A poor widow in distress because of debt appealed to the Prophet Elisha for aid. She found that her resources were exhausted, except that she had some olive oil. He directed her to take all the vessels that she had and to borrow from her neighbors and to pour the oil into these until they were filled then to sell the oil for money wherewith to pay her debts and to use the remainder for the wherewithal to live.

This story may illustrate for us the blessed rewards of faith that the Lord will grant during the Millennium. Indeed, it illustrates the general principle on which the Lord operates. The debt was to be paid. Justice was not to be violated, and any miracle to be performed would be preferably by the blessing of something already possessed. This doubtless it will be during the Millennium. The Lord will bless what people may have according to their faith in using it in harmony with his will; and it will increase with that for the full supply of all their needs.

Our Lord Jesus illustrated this in some of his miracles; and we should not forget that he made it plain that his miracles typified, or foreshadowed, his coming in the glory and the majesty of his kingdom work. (John 2:11) One of these was the feeding of the five thousand people from the small quantity of fish already at hand. Every person has something of a talent, or possession. The lesson to us would be: Use what you have, asking God's blessing, and seek to use it in harmony with his Word, nothing doubting. The Lord always rewards faith. In the case of this widow the oil was quite sufficient to fill all the vessels she had borrowed, as well as all of her own vessels. Then it stopped.

SYRIAN GENERAL CURED OF LEPROSY

(4) In the Far East leprosy is one of the most dreaded diseases and is generally accepted as incurable. The Bible seems to refer to leprosy as a figure, or type, of sin because it is incurable, except by divine miracle. Naaman, the chief commander of the Syrian king's forces, was a leper. In his family was a little Hebrew housemaid, who had been captured in one of the battles between the Syrians and the Israelites. She noted her master's plight, and remarked to her mistress about the great Prophet in Israel, Elisha, who could do anything, she believed. She suggested that he be applied to.

What seemed like idle talk was seized upon by General Naaman as a last and only hope. From his king he obtained a letter of introduction to the King of Israel, which in substance said: "I am sending this letter by the hand of my chief general, Naaman, who is a leper; and I desire you to see that he is healed." The king of Israel was appalled. He knew that he had no power over such a disease, and that it was ranked as incurable. He concluded that the Syrian king was trying to pick a quarrel with him, and that this meant war, great trouble. He rent his outer garment, as was the custom of the time, in indication of his great distress. The matter was told to the Prophet Elisha, who immediately sent the king word not to be disturbed, but to send the general to him. This was done.

When the general arrived at the Prophet's home with quite a caravan of servants, costly presents, etc., he sent word to the Prophet respecting his errand and that he had been sent by the king to him. Elisha curtly sent him word to go to the River Jordan and wash seven times. Naaman was angry. He said, "This man does not even treat me civilly. Why does he not come down to see me and make some kind of recognition of my rank and of the nation which I represent?" He then declared that there were rivers in Syria of much better water than the Jordan and that Elisha was trifling with him.

While Elisha's conduct undoubtedly was proper and directed of God and turned out well, nevertheless it would not be a wise course for the Lord's people generally to follow. In the New Testament the apostles urge that the servants of God should be courteous toward all and render honor to whom honor is due. However, the matter worked out well. The servants of the general suggested to him that he had to go by Jordan any way on his return home, and why not try, as the Prophet of Israel had said. It could do no harm and might do some good. Any way the Prophet evidently had not been trying to make money out of him, nor to get the costly presents which he had brought, and which he knew he would gladly give for such a cure. The anger of the general cooled. He bathed seven times in Jordan, as directed. The result was a miraculous cure.

Naaman was not thankless. He returned to the home of the Prophet to thank him and to urge him to accept the presents he had brought; but the Prophet would accept nothing. He was merely acting as a divine representative. His powers were not for sale. They were divine blessings. Let the General acknowledge them to God! And this General Naaman did. He confessed that no other God than Jehovah could perform such a miracle. He was apparently ready to do the will of God heartily, and asked respecting his future course. The Prophet did not tell him to become a Jew and to renounce the heathen religion of his own land, but encouraged him to return to his home and continue in his office.

General Naaman inquired as to his responsibility. If he worshiped the true God, what must he do when in the company of the king and the latter wished to go to the house of a false god? Elisha's answer in substance was that if the general made full profession of his faith in the true God, it would not be improper for him to accompany his master to the house of the false god; for his own adherence to Jehovah God would be recognized.

OTHER RESTITUTION TYPES

OCTOBER 24— 2 KINGS 6:8-23.

ELISHA AWAKENS THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON—PUNISHES HIS SERVANT GEHAZI—ENTRAPS THE SYRIAN ARMY AND RENDERS THEM GOOD FOR EVIL—IMPORTANT LESSONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psalm 34:7.

In today's Study we note Elisha's awakening of the Shunammite's son, his punishment of his servant Gehazi with leprosy, and his entrapping of the Syrian army. (2 Kings 4:8-37; 5:20-27) While these things may not find exact counterparts in the events of the coming kingdom, they nevertheless represent principles which will be in operation then—the principles of reward for right doing and punishment for intentional wrong-doing. All these principles will operate during Messiah's kingdom; and under these the world will gradually made progress. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

AWAKENING THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON

Millions of people will long remember a most touching scene in the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, representing the death of the Shunammite's son, and showing how Elisha awakened the lad from the sleep of death and restored him to his parents. Perhaps no more touching film was ever produced. Few saw it without tears. It pictured the coming of restitution work of the Millennium, when all the sleeping dead will be awakened, to resume their lives and to complete their education in the school of experience under more happy and more favorable conditions than any enjoy at the present time, except the church—those who during this age are blessed of the Lord with hearing ears, eye of faith and obedient hearts.

GEHAZI SMITTEN WITH LEPROSY

Gehazi had in many respects been a faithful servant to Elisha. As a result, he had blessings of knowledge which the majority of people did not possess. With the knowledge came responsibility; hence the severe punishment inflicted upon the man for hypocrisy and deception. We are reminded of the text which declares that if a good man depart from his well-doing and sin wilfully, his past good deeds shall not be remembered, even as it is with the evil-doer who, coming to God with full repentance and change of heart, is forgiven and received into God's family. His past evil is entirely ignored, except as it may bear its fruit in certain weaknesses of mind or body.—Ezekiel 3:17-21; 18:20-24; 33:10-16.

When General Naaman perceived the great miracle accomplished in his cleansing from leprosy, he returned to Elisha, offering thanks to God and desiring the Prophet to receive the presents which he had brought. But Elisha would receive none of them. In this he manifested what we believe is always the Lord's Spirit—never to sell spiritual things for money. It is for this reason that some ministers now object to taking up collections, holding fairs or soliciting money in any manner. Their contention is that whatever is given to the Lord's service should be given with a free hand and a ready heart. "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23) It is a privilege to give to the Lord and his cause; for the Almighty is not poor, that he should need our gifts. All the gold and silver are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.—Haggai 2:8; Psalm 50:10.

Under such a noble example Gehazi should have profited, but did not. He allowed covetousness to come into his mind. He had seen the rich Babylonian garments, and thought how fine it would be if he could have some of these and plenty of changes of linen garments. He would be like a prince. He had perceived that General Naaman regretted that his presents were not accepted. He pursued, and told the general that the Prophet had said that while he did not desire any of the garments or other things for himself, he had concluded that he might use some of these for his servants, and that he would accept gifts for them. The ruse was successful. The servant was recognized as the one seen at Elisha's place. The goods were joyfully given to him. He hid them away secretly, until the Prophet called him, told him all about the matter and pronounced his punishment—leprosy.

So will it be in the coming age. Any disobedience will meet with swift punishment. Of the judges of that time it is written that they will not judge with the hearing of the ear nor with sight of the eye; they will judge righteously.

ELISHA'S CAPTURE ATTEMPTED

It was probably after the death of General Naaman that the king of Syria declared war against the Israelites. To his surprise he found that every move he made was checkmated. If he planned to capture a certain city, it seemed as though the Israelitish king knew every detail. Thus his endeavors came to naught. He looked for a traitor amongst his own people and his own household, or for some explanation. Then it was told him by one of his servants, "Behold, the Prophet Elisha is in Israel and makes known to their king all thy counsels, even those of thy bed-chamber." Apparently the knowledge of Jehovah and Elisha had spread from General Naaman to some of the household of the king.

Intent upon his conquest, the king sought to capture Elisha. If he could not get some profit out of the man for himself and his side, he could at least keep him from communicating with the king of Israel. He spent spies to find where Elisha dwelt, and located him at the little city of Dothan. Thereupon he sent a good-sized force, quite sufficient to surround the city and make it impossible for Elisha to escape—horses, chariots, etc. He would do two things—not only capture a city, but capture the Prophet.

In the morning early, Elisha's servant looked forth and beheld the companies of the enemy on every side, barring every way of escape. He was terrified and said, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Promptly came the answer, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." The servant did not appreciate this; for he had not come to realize fully what divine powers were with his master. Then Elisha prayed that the eyes of the young man might be opened; and he beheld angelic hosts, horses and chariots of fire about Elisha. This was sufficient to give the young man the needed courage and to assure him of God's power.

Just what kind of vision this was makes no particular difference. Undoubtedly it was merely a vision, without any reality; but it served its purpose. God's power surrounds all his consecrated people in an unlimited measure. These powers are exercised by spirit beings, entirely invisible to men. The important thing is to get the right thought—that under all conditions omnipotent power stands behind and completely surrounds those who are his. Nothing can befall this special class except in accord with the divine program. Whatever may occur in their experience will be of divine knowledge and permission; hence the promise to this class is that all things shall work together for their good.—Romans 8:28.

THE SYRIAN HOST CAPTURED

The Prophet exercised a supernatural power of blinding the Syrian host; but just what the power was or how it was accomplished we can only conjecture. Doubtless their eyes were wide open; and doubtless they saw the hills, valleys, roads, etc.; but the eyes of their understanding were closed, apparently, in some hypnotic manner. Elisha gave them to understand that he would lead them to the proper city; and he did so, guiding them straight to the city of Samaria, in through its gates. There, surrounded by the hosts of the capital, he broke the hypnotic spell. Their eyes opened; and they perceived that they were in the hands of their enemies, who, with drawn swords and leveled spears, offered no opportunity of escape. They had been entrapped, but not to their injury—for their good, for their instruction.

The king of Israel inquired of the Prophet whether or not he should smite these and destroy them or what. The answer was "No; feed them and let them return peaceably to their own home." The king caught the spirit of the proposition, and not merely gave them bread and water, such as might be given prisoners, but made them a bountiful feast—treated them royally, treated them as friends. Then they were set free to go to their own land, there to tell the strange experience that had occurred and to demonstrate to their king the impossibility of successfully fighting against the kingdom of Israel under such circumstances.

INTERESTING LETTERS

NEWS FROM FRENCH BIBLE STUDENTS

I would be very grateful if you would kindly send me some tracts for distribution among sorrowing hearts, as the poor world is getting disheartened, and this is the right time for presenting to them the Gospel message. I have already made several such distributions, for which the people were very glad, several of them saying they wished they were already living in that glorious day. God's Word alone can bring them comfort.—JULES ROY.

Soon an era of righteousness shall be established by Christ and his bride, of whom we are invited to become a part. What a comfort this thought is to me through all the dangers of this hour! Here new opportunities are afforded me to bring this precious message to the friends—soldiers of my regiment. Now, as soon as I receive the TOWER, some of them want to read it ahead of me. They read also Vol. 1 of the STUDIES from time to time.—ELIE MALINGRAT.

I wish to inform you of the departure of Brother Louis Durieu for the Orient (Dardanelles). Being told to start without delay for Marseilles (where he probably still is), he was unable to write to you himself of his going, and thus to present you his brotherly regards. I was much delighted at the real comfort I derived from reading in the last TOWER that marvelous page about love. May the Lord bless it for all the divine Israel!—ELISE TRULEUX.

I am glad to be able to write to you these lines to express my great joy at receiving THE WATCH TOWER (French), which is so interesting and comforting in the troublous times now upon us! What a peace fills our hearts when everything is crashing about us! By the grace of God strengthening us, we are enabled to endure with patience and perseverance the greatest trials permitted of him for our spiritual welfare. Yes, we can love and praise our good heavenly Father for his many blessings.—M. NONGAILLARD.

We are very happy here at C—— (near Dunkirk), being able to devote ourselves freely to holy study during the short time permitted us here below, and we pray the Lord to strengthen our faith upon the solid foundation of present truth, so as to better resist the tumultuous current beating about.—H. ROUSSEL.

Here in Liège (Belgium) everything is well in a temporal way, but God has blessed us still more spiritually. As you know, our meetings have never been interrupted. They still take place every Sunday in our hall at the Hawirs, and every Thursday at home. During the first three months of the war we had four meetings a week. Now, work is going on again in all the coal mines and we have been abundantly blessed.—F. PETRIE.

We thank the Lord more and more for having raised Pastor Russell and his valiant fellow-servants, through whom he has so generously and mercifully blessed us. We remember daily before the throne of heavenly grace the great help you lend to the good "grain" already garnered, as well as pray God to strengthen and sustain you by his all-powerful arm in the good fight you have undertaken; also for the cause of truth, for which you have vowed to be faithful unto death, on behalf of all the brethren and sisters.—VICTOR RANDOUR.

The following letters from brethren who are prisoners in Germany:

I have had the opportunity to preside at a meeting participated in by more than one hundred people. Helping me were some friends who had also studied the first and second volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, as well as some tracts. With God's assistance. I have been enabled to give my experience before all the Protestants in the camp. The aforesaid friends left in March, I being sick at the time. Since then I have worked to spread the good tidings of the kingdom. "Do as occasion serve thee, for God is with thee." (1 Samuel 10:7) I want to work for the Lord, and may his grace be with me!—FREDERIC POLLARD.

With much joy I have received the books you forwarded me. I have read and studied them without ceasing, having asked of our brother J. H. his help to that extent. I have understood and I am following. What is necessary is to win the final victory. The contents of the books, where followed, cause a lasting effect. It is a meat that does not decay.—L. FLAMME (newly interested).

I have received news of my wife and relatives in Rouboix (invaded territory); they are in good health, and so are the dear brethren and sisters there. I see that the Lord knows how to keep his own through all their difficulties, and I pray him to give each of his beloved children the needed strength to bear every other trial that may still be in store in this evil day. Kindly send me some tracts and booklets, and also, if possible, some English and German tracts for distribution. I thank you for the tracts received and the card, "My Morning Resolve."—JEAN HER.

SCRIPTURE PRECEDENTS FOLLOWED

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Some time ago I read in THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY of a suit you had entered against Rev. J. J. Ross of Canada.

Now, I am only a humble seeker after truth, and I cannot criticize you, because I have not sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures to do so. There is, however, one point I would like to have cleared up; and if you would be so good as to take up a few lines in THE WATCH TOWER to answer me, I am sure it would do not only me a lot of good, but others also who may have given the matter serious thought.

The question is, dear Pastor, how could you as a follower of Jesus bring suit against a fellow creature, no matter how vilely he talked about you or your work?

You know how our Savior was talked about, and aside from a rebuke he did nothing. At least, he never sought redress through any legal agency.

I despise the clerical profession, because I know them to be liars and parasites, who suck a fat living from the parish; that is, a good part of them. Of course, there are many noble, misled men amongst them; and I am sure they will be rewarded for whatever good they may have done.

Please, dear Pastor, will you not answer one who is sorely troubled—one who believes your work the grandest ever undertaken, and who loves God and his people, although he feels himself an unworthy sinner—one who hates to think of one who is doing so grand and noble a work for Jesus, as not walking in his footsteps in every respect?

Yours sincerely. A. WOODS.—New York.

REPLY BY EDITOR.

We are not certain that we did the wisest and best thing—the thing most pleasing to the Lord in the matter mentioned. However, the suit against Rev. Ross was not undertaken without consideration of the Lord's will and of the precedents of the Bible.

Amongst Bible students, informed respecting the divine Word and its requirements, Matthew 18:15-17 is the accepted standard of action:—

(1) Private conference;

(2) If necessary, taking a couple of brethren in a further endeavor to get at the right and to stop what is believed to be the wrong;

(3) In the event of the concurrence of the brethren that the wrong is being done, and of the refusal on the part of the wrong-doer to desist, the third step is to bring the matter before the church. If the church agrees, then the wrong-doer, if he still refuses to desist from the wrong course, is to be disfellowshiped—to be barred from any office or service of the church—treated as an outsider—"like a publican."

We could not see how this rule could be applied to Rev. Ross; for so far as we have knowledge he would have no regard whatever for such proceedings and could not be debarred finally from fellowship; because he recognizes no such fellowship. We felt, therefore, that any proceedings against Rev. Ross must be along the lines which he himself would recognize. He, like other ministers, recognizes the governments of this world as being parts of Christ's kingdom; and their courts, therefore, as being parts of the divine institution. For this reason we felt that we were approaching the subject from a just and Golden Rule standpoint in appealing to the courts of justice, which Rev. Ross recognizes as being the divine institution. In other words, we attempted to meet him on his own grounds.

As for Scriptural precedents: Jesus did not need to take his case before the courts, because his enemies did that—taking him before the chief priests and the Sanhedrin. They condemned him in the Jewish courts. When before his judges, Jesus offered no resistance, in the sense of using his power, either of eloquence or of divine energy, to resist their unjust decisions. He merely submitted himself with the complaint, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?"—John 18:23.

The Apostles, Peter and John, brought before the Sanhedrin court, made their defense. So also did St. Paul. On one occasion, because he thought he was not getting justice, he appealed to Caesar's court for whatever the Roman law might provide. Similarly, I appealed to the court having jurisdiction of Rev. Ross, having in mind to stop him from doing evil and from opposing the message of the Lord, which I am seeking to bear to all people. My attorneys, of course, were obliged to bring their action in harmony with the laws of the land. While the case was still pending, I wrote Rev. Ross, assuring him that I had no unkind intention, and proposing that I would discontinue the suit if he would promise to discontinue his injurious, slanderous course.

ENJOYING THE SPIRITUAL FOOD

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I am reading about ten pages in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES daily. Several times I have tried this plan, but did not continue. This time I am keeping to my lesson as outlined in the Berean Questions.

I have read the volumes several times, but by this method I am surprised at the results. Every day I have a definite study before me, and have more desire for the spiritual food than for the natural. I find it the best way to cultivate love in thought, word and deed. Daily I ask the Father to help me, and daily I render my account. I come far short, but can see progress. Praise his name!

I am speeding along in the race, trusting in every promise and "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." I am content, and am watching THE WATCH TOWER for the "light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." How it rejoices my heart to know that the time is near when the faithful will partake of the best wine and earth's festivities begin! Much Christian love to yourself and all the family, in which my husband joins.

Your sister in Christ,

MRS. W. W. GOODWIN.—Rhode Island.

EDITOR'S REPLY TO ABOVE

I rejoice with you, dear Sister, in the blessing you are now having from systematic study of the Bible through the daily reading of the volumes, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and the Scripture references which they bring to your attention. With the multitudinous affairs of life pressing us, we need to order our lives intelligently in the interest of our new natures. Otherwise, the cares of this life and the deceitful lure of earthly riches would hinder us from obtaining our spiritual food, rest, refreshment and strength—thus incapacitating us for our spiritual blessings and development, and leaving us unfit for a share in the kingdom.

I think the plan you have adopted of taking the Berean questions and the portion which they represent as your daily lesson is a good one. As you know, some five years ago many of THE WATCH TOWER readers began systematically to read twelve pages or more every day. Such as have been following this course report splendid success, and show it in their spiritual development. However, I think that your plan of using the questions and taking a special lesson for each day is still better. Often the lesson, however, would run over only one page or two; and in such event you, of course, can readily take in several lessons for one day.

The advantage of the question books is that they promote study. One of the most important things for people in every walk of life is to learn to think. We have all done very little of this in respect to religion in the past. One of the mistakes which some of the Brethren make in leading Berean study classes is that they talk too much. The successful Bible class leader is the one who does comparatively little talking, except in an emergency, but who stimulates thought in the class through the questions and through the interrogative form of suggesting answers when necessary rather than giving the answers directly. Bible classes are specially profitable because of the thinking on Bible topics which they arouse.

You do not mention it, dear Sister, but doubtless yourself and husband are getting great blessings from the use of the MANNA book every morning. It surely has brought a great deal of blessing to many. The text and comment are quite brief, requiring only a few minutes; then, where there is a considerable number at the table, a further discussion of the text is often very illuminating. Thus the day is well started with helpful thoughts.

I am glad to know that the Morning Resolve and the evening self-examination at the throne of grace are also comforting, strengthening to you. You do not mention the vow. I remember that you and your husband informed me long ago that you had taken it. Nothing that we ever had, I think, has accomplished more of blessing for the readers of THE WATCH TOWER. We have heard from about fifteen thousand that have taken the vow, but we doubt not that the number is much larger than this, as continually dear friends remark to us that they took the vow years ago, but did not think to mention the fact in writing to us. We are always glad to know of your welfare, and believe the vow is a special feature of blessing the Lord has ordained for our day. Besides this, it constitutes the most wonderful prayer-circle that was ever known in the world—fifteen thousand or more pledged to each other and to the Lord that they will remember each other and the harvest work every day in prayer.

FROM BATTLE-TORN RUSSIA

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—

This is to inform you that I fell into Russian captivity, and after a long journey was brought here to Jelabuga, Russia. I could not bring any religious tracts with me, and now I feel their lack very much. Therefore I earnestly request you to send me your complete works in the German language free of charge. Of course, I will thankfully reimburse you for their expense when we, with God's help, return. At the same time I would request you to send me some Hungarian literature and include with the others.

Please write me a few lines of comfort, and also something regarding conditions existing in the United States. With loving greetings,

Your brother in the Lord, FALUVÉGI DÉUES.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE MILLENNIUM OF PEACE

A PROMINENT NEW YORK BANKER'S OPINION

"The cost of the war is now around $50,000,000 per day, and the amount spent thus far for a year of war is estimated to have been about $15,500,000,000. The wealth of the United States has been computed to be something in the neighborhood of $189,000,000,000. The first year of war has cost about one twelfth of this vast amount. At this rate of destruction a sum equal to the total wealth of the United States would be wiped out in twelve years.

"But to this money cost of a year's war must be added the value of manufacturing and other buildings in villages, towns and cities, all or a large part of which have been destroyed, of crops devastated, of goods and household properties ruined, and of vast further losses sustained in the communities, which are being fire-and-shot-swept in the path of the contending armies. Nothing is included here of the industrial value of human lives which have been destroyed by the millions. Not taking into account the agony and grief which engulfs all Europe, the contemplation of the economic waste of war is appalling. And it is no wonder that the minds of many millions turn to the problem of how peace can be brought about. It is a fact, however, that these problems occupy the thoughts of people in this and other neutral countries more than they do those of the belligerent nations. The National City Bank, in its August circular, says that the appalling destructive results of the year of war signify practically nothing as to when the conflict will end; that there are no signs that either side is running out of men or money or that the people of any of the warring countries are weakening in resolution or confidence.

"For many people on this side it is impossible to understand this, but when it is thoroughly appreciated that a patched-up-peace would mean merely a deferring of further fighting until recuperation could be effected and that then the whole bloody conflict would have to be fought out over again to an even bitterer end, the determination of the belligerents will be better understood. There is only one result which can now be accepted as an outcome of this world war, and that is a result which will mean disarmament of the nations and a peace of a thousand years. With every country stripped of its fighting organizations, and safety in the keeping of an international police force, the vast sums wrung by taxation from the various people for keeping up prodigious armies and navies would be turned to the arts of peace and commerce and relieved from the terrible burden and anxiety which has increasingly oppressed Europe for years, the countries of the world would devote themselves individually to the winning of prosperity and happiness.

"The national debts of the warring countries have nearly doubled since the war began, and carrying these will entail added taxation in the years to come. If a peace were now concluded which did not make later conflict impossible, this added taxation for paying interest on an enormously increased National debt besides the immense sums for which the countries would be taxed to establish new and larger military organizations, would make the life of individuals unbearable. Repudiation of National debts might, and would, be very likely to follow.

"The war must be fought to a conclusion which will posi-

tively prevent a recurrence of conditions that will make it possible for any nation to attack another. Death of militarism is the only hope of peace. And this country is as much interested in such a conclusion as are any of the combatants.

"If we look at our own position selfishly, it will be seen that any other result would place us in the ring of nations which must defend its rights by preponderating military and naval power. By the course of events we are already placed in that position and must now take up at once the task and enormous expense of placing ourselves in readiness to meet with powerful equipment of men and munitions, near or remote contingencies on land or sea.

"In the meantime the influence of the United States must be used in whatever way may be most efficient to bring about world disarmament as the only means of preserving civilization, the very existence of which is now threatened."—*Bache Review.*

DECLINE TO PROMOTE WAR

Editorially the *New York American* says: "Very soon after the war broke out it became evident that each of the belligerents would be short of money before many months had elapsed. It was also evident that sooner or later loans would be sought in America. The prevailing opinion was that Germany and Austria would be first to seek loans, since England, France and Russia had piled up nearly twice as much gold in preparation for war as had the Teutonic empires.

"In no long time it turned out that a German loan was sought to be floated in this country. Under these circumstances—the Germans actually seeking a loan and England and France being probable loan seekers—certain American bankers inquired of the Administration whether the Government would look with tolerance upon the making of war-loans by Americans to foreign belligerent powers. The answer was an emphatic negative. In the exact words of Mr. Wilson these bankers were told that any effort to finance loans for belligerents during the war 'WOULD BE INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF NEUTRALITY.'

* * *

"The Administration no longer deems it the 'best practise of nations in the matter of neutrality' to discourage the exportation of arms and munitions to foreign belligerents. It believes in encouraging not only the ordinary manufacture and sale of weapons and ammunition, but the most EXTRAORDINARY efforts to supply belligerents with these means of murder in IMMENSE QUANTITIES. It no longer believes that floating foreign war loans in the United States is 'inconsistent with the spirit of neutrality.'

"The Administration has just let it be known through the Secretary of State that the Government looks with favor upon the efforts of the British Commission to negotiate in this country the unprecedented war-loan of a thousand million dollars.

"That the Administration is no longer in favor of praying for peace we will not affirm. But we do affirm that a prayer for peace is an insult to the ear of God when the Administration employs its powers to promote the shipment of arms and the loans of millions which alone make the prolongation of war possible and which alone prevent the early making of peace.

"These statements are not partisan political declamation. They are plain statements of 'INDISPUTABLE AND UNDISPUTED FACTS.' If the people of the United States want the European war prolonged, they can prolong it for months, possibly for years. All they need to do is to supply the European Governments with ammunition and money. The European Governments will supply the men to be butchered. They will supply the victims of wholesale murder, if we will make the weapons of wholesale murder and lend the money to continue the murderous use of those weapons in the full force of their destructiveness over a sufficiently protracted period.

"What else can be said of the attempt to borrow one thousand millions in this country save that it is an attempt to prolong the war, and to make the war even more hideously murderous and destructive than it is?

"The exact truth is that Mr. Morgan and his foreign allies ask the neutral people of the United States to supply four civilized nations of Europe with the money and weapons to destroy two other civilized nations.

"The people of the United States are asked to do for England, France, Italy and Russia exactly what the Japanese are doing. The Japanese Premier told the Japanese Diet last week that at the peace conference Japan would certainly insist on her share of the spoils if the allies were victorious, BECAUSE JAPAN HAD RENDERED MORE EFFICIENT AID TO HER ALLIES BY MANUFACTURING WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION THAN SHE COULD HAVE DONE BY SENDING HER ARMY AND NAVY TO THEIR HELP. And what Japan, a confessed ally and declared belligerent, is doing is exactly what we are told it is our neutral duty to do.

"A plain-thinking, honest man is hard put to it to distinguish the difference between hostility and neutrality, WHEN BOTH RENDER EXACTLY THE SAME SERVICE TO THE SAME BELLIGERENTS, THOUGH ONE IS A DECLARED ALLY AND THE OTHER A PROFESSED NEUTRAL.

"As things are going, and with no guilt of blood on our hands, the financial domination of the world is surely within our grasp. The British pound, the French franc, the German mark are all falling in value compared with the American dollar. Thus a great and favorable exchange profit comes to the legitimate manufacturer and producer of the United States.

"Wall Street financiers propose that we shall actually strip ourselves of the one huge innocent advantage of the war, in order to secure the payment of blood-money to the makers of the weapons of murder and to prolong indefinitely the grief and guilt of the war.

"Against this unpatriotic, this unprofitable, this unneutral, this inhuman course of proposed conduct we protest in the name of neutrality, in the name of patriotism, in the name of humanity, and, finally, in the name of civilization itself, thus menaced and imperilled and rapidly being brought face to face with the destruction of all its gains through so many wonderful centuries of the white man's struggles and achievements."

REVOLUTION AND ANARCHY COMING

In some of the statements following, the Editor of the *New York American*, probably without the slightest knowledge of the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER and his presentations, has used language that is almost identical in respect to the outlook—that, after the present war will come the greatest revolution ever known and that it will be followed by anarchy. What the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER discerns from the teaching of the Bible and has expressed for the last forty years the Editor of the *American* now sees without the aid of prophetic information. Doubtless before long the entire world will begin to see the same thing with the eyes of their understanding and, later on, with their natural sight. THE WATCH TOWER is not to be understood as endorsing the *New York American* or its presentations, past, present or future, on all subjects. We have quoted from it, and are quoting again in this issue, matters which show that its Editor is awake and approximating facts and experiences that soon will be manifest to all. We quote as follows:—

FROM THE NEW YORK AMERICAN SEPTEMBER 28th:

"The Wall Street promoters of the European war loan have told the English and French Commissioners that they are unwilling to murder the manhood of Europe, to make widows of the women, orphans of the children and mourners of the mothers for five per cent, BUT THEY WILL DO IT FOR FIVE AND ONE-HALF PER CENT.

"They have said they would not be responsible for the protraction of this wicked war, the further destruction of inestimable treasures in Europe, the inevitable and possibly disastrous complications in our own financial and political and diplomatic situation here in America for five per cent, BUT THEY WILL FOR ONE-HALF OF ONE PER CENT MORE.

"They have sternly declared that they will not repudiate America's high political principles and abandon America's lofty humanitarian ideas and imperil America's material progress and prosperity for anything less than that additional ONE-HALF OF ONE PER CENT.

"The measure of the conscience, the humanity and patriotism of Wall Street is now clearly defined and mathematically expressed.

"The probabilities now are that the loan will be made, the additional pound of flesh, or half pound of flesh, having been guaranteed, but the punishment for America's evil participation in Europe's wicked war will duly and deservedly come through the revolution and repudiation which are very likely to follow this war.

"The first rumblings of revolution are already discernible in Russia, and discontent among the working classes is beginning to spread to a considerable extent in Great Britain.

"If the war is sufficiently prolonged there will undoubtedly be revolution and probably red anarchy in most of the nations involved in the war.

"In the wake of revolution will follow repudiation of public obligations or depreciation so great that it will amount to repudiation.

"If any reader, accustomed to the security of peace, imagines that such depreciation is impossible, let him recall the fact that in French Revolutionary times assignats depreciated to less than three per cent of their value, and assignats, too, were better than treasury notes, for they at least had the value of the land behind them.

"Perhaps even FIVE AND ONE-HALF per cent interest is insufficient inducement for a loan which in the eventualities of war and revolution may become worth less than three cents on the dollar.

"If any reader, accustomed to the sound and stable government of this country, believes that revolution is not now possible in any European State, let him ask himself frankly how long he believes the strong-bodied, stern-minded, plain people of Europe are going to endure the immeasurable misery of this unnatural war into the hellish depths of which they have been precipitated by the vanities and inanities, the enmities and jealousies of their arrogant and ambitious rulers.

"Revolutions are not respectful of royalty, nor of constituted authority, nor of the established order. Revolutions are not regardful of the financial obligations of a deposed and discarded system. Revolutions exhibit no such soft and suave consideration for money and the money power as calm and conservative governments do.

* * *

"To evade their humanitarian obligations, and avoid heavy and harrowing responsibilities, the loan promoters of Wall Street say that the particular marked dollars of this loan shall not be used for the purchase of arms and ammunition. Such a statement, however, is insincere and inconclusive.

"We are increasing the financial resources of the countries to which we make this loan by the exact amount of the loan, and their additional financial resources enable them to buy additional arms and ammunition."

"GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH"

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of August 15, 1913, which please see.]

MEDITATIONS IN THE NIGHT

"My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches."—Psalm 63:5, 6.

By the expression as to satisfying his soul with marrow and fatness, the Prophet David evidently referred to the abundance of God's favor and blessing which had come to him. He had a large portion, a fat portion, and appreciated God's goodness, God's favor toward him, taking him as a shepherd boy from among the flocks, and privileging him to engage in His service and finally bringing him to the throne as the king of Israel. For all this he was very grateful to the Lord. He appreciated all of God's blessings. It was apropriate that his mouth should give praise, that he should be joyful, that he should speak of the Lord's loving-kindness. So we find in the Psalms of David many beautiful expressions in which he gives great praise and thanksgiving to the Almighty. He speaks also of God's majesty, of his wondrous power and might, and refers to the heavens as his handiwork.

The Prophet certainly used his tongue to praise the Lord. When we consider that he lived in a time when schooling was limited and that he got very little of it, we realize that he certainly made good use of what he obtained. The fruit of his labor has come down to bless the world all through the centuries. He intimates that he did this singing or praising God to some extent in the night—"when I remember Thee upon my bed and meditate upon thee in the night watches." In ancient times the people were more dependent upon the moon and stars for light at night, not having as we have today full provision for illumination by means of refined oil, gas, electricity, etc. Mr. Rockefeller had not yet been born, nor modern inventions dreamed of. They were dependent for artificial light upon olive oil, and that was not very plentiful. As a consequence, the people went to bed early. So King David was thinking upon the Almighty as he lay upon his bed, meditating upon God—he was not thinking foolish thoughts, nor planning foolish doings. We are not surprised that his mind was full of beautiful thoughts, lofty sentiments.

NOBLEST SUBJECT FOR MEDITATION

Whoever has time for meditation, will receive a great blessing if his thoughts shall turn toward the Almighty, acknowledging his goodness, seeking to give praise to God for all his manifold mercies, meditating upon God in the night watches. As far as this verse is concerned, we see no reason for thinking it prophetic; yet it represents any who are seeking to be in harmony with God. There are millions of people in the world who have never heard of God's wonderful plan; therefore our mouths should be used in praising God. We should be continually remembering the Lord in all of our moments of rest, whether upon a bed, or wherever it may be. We should cultivate the habit of meditating upon him. We think very few people meditate upon the Lord; and it is to their disadvantage that they do not.

The great and holy laws of God find expression in him. We should think of God as the personification of all that is just, loving, kind, wise, in character and principle. This should stimulate us to be like him. The more we appreciate a noble character the more we desire to emulate it. The more we see of God's mighty works in nature and his mercies toward us, in that same proportion our hearts and lips will praise him. If there is a prophetic thought connected with this passage, it is that all through the dark ages, all through the night time of this age, God's faithful people have been praising him. All of his true people have been praising him and have done so with joyful lips. Those who have not been doing this are not of this class. We should, therefore, render praise to our God. We should meditate more and more upon his holy will and ways, and strive to conform ourselves thereto. Thus shall we become more and more like unto our Father in heaven.

TO SERVE, NOT TO BE SERVED

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Matthew 20:28.

The Master was impressing upon his hearers the difference between himself and other great kings. He had come to be King of Israel, in fulfilment of Scripture prophecy. Unlike earthly rulers he was not seeking to learn how much he could get out of the people, but how much he could do for the people. He was not selfish. He was not trying to see how little he could serve and how much others could serve him; but on the contrary, how little others might do for him and how much he could do for others. And this is his expectation in respect to his followers. He and his disciples, called with a heavenly calling, called to a heavenly kingdom, are not called to be selfish or to appropriate honors to themselves for their own gratification; but they are called to service—especially to the service of the people of God. This is the true meaning of the word minister; namely, one who serves.

It is especially appropriate that all who are followers of the Lord Jesus should remember that we have each been called to service; and that those who are ministering in spiritual things, those who are especially known by the name of "minister," should bear in mind that theirs is an office which calls for service, not to themselves, but to others; and that they have consecrated their lives thus to serve. Our Lord entered upon his ministry at his consecration. Of his life previous to his baptism at Jordan, the Scriptures say very little, so that the more attention may be attracted to his three and a half years of ministry in the truth, when he was laying down his life for others—for his friends and also for his foes.

The same is true of all his followers. Our ministry begins at the time of our consecration. We are not authorized to minister, or serve, in holy things until we have entered upon the way which the Lord has pointed out to us. We are not today, however, obliged to wait until we have reached the age of thirty before we begin our ministry; but at as early an age as we can comprehend what we are engaging to perform, we may give our lives to the Lord and to the service of the truth and of the brethren. This is because we are not under the law covenant.—Romans 3:19.

ONLY SON OF MAN COULD SERVE AS RANSOMER OF MAN

Our Lord speaks of himself as the Son of Man, who came to "minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He was indeed the Son of God, even while he was the Son of Man. The perfect man Adam, before his fall into sin, was a son of God. Our Lord in calling himself the Son of Man was emphasizing the fact that he was no longer on the spirit plane, but on the human plane. He came to earth for a specific purpose—as he explained, to minister, to serve. He could not have done the necessary service for man as a spirit being. The requirement was that he should become a man in order to ransom mankind. He could ransom man only by becoming man. He could purchase life for the perfect Adam and the race who lost life in him only by becoming a perfect man.

"An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life," was the demand of the divine law. Adam had sinned, and must be redeemed before he could be restored, either physically, mentally, or morally, or could be returned to God's favor. Jesus had come to make possible this full restoration. His life was devoted to the service of others, and he completed this great service in his death on the cross. Throughout his earthly sojourn he gave us a noble example of the proper life of those who would be followers in his footsteps.

OUR SERVICE PARTICULARLY FOR THE NEW CREATION

Many misunderstand the Bible and think that now is the time to save the world. Hence they are spending all their time and energies to comfort and uplift humanity. They are indeed engaged in laudable efforts; for every good work or effort is to be commended. But to those who are rightly informed respecting the divine plan there is another, a far higher work, to be done now. The work of God in the present age has not been the reformation of the world, but the development of the new creation. This work is not yet fully completed. If we would work the work of God, our works must relate to the new creation preeminently. We may do good unto all men as we have opportunity, as the Apostle says, but especially are we to serve the household of faith.

Jesus was in line for this work of ministry. Although there were no new creatures as yet, while he was here in the flesh, his work was to prepare for these new creatures. His work was the gathering out of some who would be faithful footstep followers of himself, and the laying down of his life on their behalf and on behalf of the whole world.

In the context we note the fact that two of Jesus' disciples were especially desirous at this time of sitting upon the throne with the Master in his kingdom, one upon his right and the other upon his left. Jesus did not condemn them for this desire, but pointed out to them how difficult were the conditions, and asked them whether they were able to comply with these conditions. They replied, "We are able." They were willing, at least. That their answer was pleasing to Jesus was manifested by his words, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with my baptism." They asked for places in the kingdom very near to him. Jesus informed them that he was not himself able to give them such places—that the places would not be given according to favor, but according to justice; and that the Father would dispense these.

ARE WE MEETING THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS?

The place that we occupy in the kingdom will depend much upon the extent to which we become ministers, or servants. And if we simply try to get as much as possible out of others and to give as little as possible, we shall not be such characters as the Lord is seeking for rulership in the kingdom; in fact, we would not gain the kingdom at all. He is seeking a very choice class. This class will all be servants, willing and glad to serve, esteeming it a great privilege to lay down their lives in the service of the brethren, to the extent of their ability and opportunity; for the service of the brethren is the service of God, to whom they have rendered themselves in consecration, to whom they have professed to devote their lives.

PROFITLESS AND PROFITABLE SERVICE

***"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."*—1 Corinthians 13:3.**

The Apostle has been discussing the gifts of the holy Spirit. In chapter 12 he has shown that the Lord gave one or more miraculous gifts to each one of the early church who accepted the Gospel message and became a follower of Christ. These gifts were for two purposes; for the benefit of the person himself, and also for a testimony to outsiders. The Gospel message was new, and some effective and convincing methods were necessary to the starting of the infant church. After pointing out these various gifts and intimating that the gift of public teaching, oratory, was the most valuable, St. Paul says, "And yet I show unto you a more excellent way." He then assures them that the fruits of the Spirit are far more important; and that love is the most valuable fruit, without which all gifts, all zeal, would be valueless.

There are Christian people today who greatly lament that the church of our time does not have the gifts possessed by the early church. They feel sure that the absence of these gifts of the Spirit at present denotes a great lack of faith and faithfulness among God's people. But these seem not to have noticed that the Apostle Paul assured the church of his day that these gifts would pass away. Hear him: "Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge [miraculous knowledge or ability to understand], it shall vanish away. . . . . And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." (Vs. 8, 13) We see that these miraculous gifts passed away gradually. They were conferred only by the apostles, and hence after the death of the apostles and of those upon whom the apostles had laid their hands in conferring the gifts, no others could receive them. The possession of one or more of these gifts, however, did not signify acceptance in the kingdom of heaven. A man might have some of those miraculous gifts at that time, and still be a castaway.

To whatever extent the Christian cultivates faith, hope, and love, to that extent he is cultivating that which will be eternal. Among these three love stands first. There is an important sense in which faith will fail; for when faith shall be swallowed up in sight, there will not be the need of its exercise that now exists. There is also an important sense in which hope will cease. For when that which is perfect shall have come, when hope is lost in full fruition, we shall not need to hope as now. As St. Paul says, "For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" We shall continue to have hope in that we shall always be looking forward to glories to come; and we shall exercise faith in that we shall never lose confidence in the Lord and his goodness and faithfulness or in one another; but faith and hope will not be necessary in the same sense as now. Love, however, will never fail in any sense or degree, but will only enlarge and deepen. "Love never faileth"; it is a characteristic of God himself, and every perfect being will be an embodiment of this glorious quality. Those possessing the divine nature will have it to the fullest degree, in its highest attainment.

It is in connection with this contrast between the gifts and fruits of the Spirit that the Apostle uses the language of the text under consideration. Who would give all his goods to feed the poor but from love? We reply, There might be less worthy motives for so doing, as the Apostle intimates. If there be no love, it profiteth nothing. If there be much love, it profiteth much. If there be little love, it profiteth a little. We believe that the most of those who give to the poor have some love. We believe that many of the benefactions of today are prompted by love. To whatever extent an act of benevolence is thus prompted it will bring a blessing. To whatever extent it is prompted by selfishness and a desire for vainglory it will bring no blessing. This is true either of the church or of the world.

The giving of the goods to feed the poor might be done with a view to popularity or to selfish advancement. The Pharisees made a great show of their holiness; but love was not the mainspring of their actions. Our Lord said that they had their reward—which was the praise of men. If a politician running for an office were to give his goods to feed the poor and those poor voted for him at the polls, he would have his reward. Why should he have two rewards? He got his votes, and that was his object in his distributions. But the reward which the Lord gives is both a present and a future one.

As to private charities, there are public provisions made today which to a large extent make private donations to the poor unnecessary and often unwise. But there is another way to feed the poor which is still more important. We may feed the spiritually hungry, and may assist in clothing the spiritually naked. So we may spend our money and give our goods to feed the poor in the very best way possible, though the

feeding and the clothing of the body may not be ignored when necessary. But even this spiritual feeding and clothing would not be acceptable to the Lord unless we do it from genuine love for him and his and all men. To whatever extent any Christian gives to the Lord's cause for outward show or because he thinks it may be expected of him, or from any motive save that of love for the Lord, to that extent he would receive no reward. If it is done from love it will be rewarded in heaven; and it "profiteth" also in his character development for the kingdom.

MURDERS HER GRANDCHILDREN

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of March 1, 1911, which please see.]

EUREKA DRAMA—CLASS EXTENSION

The PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION was greatly blessed of the Lord and, we believe, accomplished a great work. Many new classes and many enlarged classes are amongst the fruits. While we know much of the fruitage of this service in the Lord, a wide-spread, general impression, favorable to the truth, was made; and what good this has accomplished only eternity will show. The majority of our DRAMAS, both here and in Europe, are idle because the funds necessary to their free presentation have been exhausted. We are not soliciting money, but merely stating facts.

Meantime, the EUREKA DRAMA, described in our issues of August 1st and 15th, 1914, has been accomplishing great success under the Lord's blessing. Not only have thousands been permitted to hear the Good Tidings, but the brethern who have given the exhibitions and have conducted the follow-up work, have received great blessings in their own hearts as a part of their reward for faithfulness to their opportunities. Exhibitions have been given in many small cities and towns in competition with moving pictures, and with good success. However, we recommend, brethren, that the EUREKA outfit be used in places where there are no moving picture theatres. We have the most complete combination of slides of a religious kind to be found anywhere in the world, and we have the finest phonograph presentations of the human voice to be found anywhere. Everybody is astonished at the clearness, at the distinctness of tone with which the lectures and hymns are rendered.

RECORDS IN MANY LANGUAGES

Besides the English, we have the DRAMA records in German, Swedish, Danish and Finnish; and we have in prospect Italian, Spanish and Polish. The latter three, however, we may not be able to supply this year. The foreign records are double price. The hymns can be furnished only in English.

We know of no better way in which to serve the Truth and to interest the public than by the use of the EUREKA DRAMA. After the giving of the three DRAMA exhibitions there comes an opportunity for follow-up work—Class Extension work. We urge nothing; we are merely mentioning the facts so that those who desire and have the opportunity may avail themselves of these privileges. For new readers we will here repeat, briefly,

A DESCRIPTION OF OUTFITS, PRICES, ETC.

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. X

Any of our readers desiring to purchase for his own use the full set of 96 DRAMA lectures (three PARTS, two hours each) with nine choice introductory, intermission and closing hymns and a portable phonograph, with a carrying case, can have the entire outfit for..... $38.50
The full set of records without phonograph. 29.00
Carrying case for records..... 1.25 extra.

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. Y

This outfit is the one especially intended for the CLASS-EXTENSION work. Its three PARTS require only the same number of lecture and music records as foregoing; but, to use to full capacity—the THREE PARTS showing three places at once—each PART should have its own Phonograph, each PART its own Stereopticon, etc. We therefore show each PART complete in itself, as follows:

One PART includes one Primo Stereopticon for electric current—Oneida Lens (three for varying distances); special price..... $20.00
Variable Rheostat (five amp., ten amp., or fifteen amp.) may be effective for house current or for heavy current arc lights..... 6.00
Attachment for Acetylene Gas or Presto Light (useful in places where there is no electric current, but where gas can be taken from an automobile tank). 4.00
DRAMA stereopticon slides, beautifully tinted, with special carrying box and carrying case..... 38.00
One portable Phonograph, one Operator's Book, Lecture and Hymn Records for one PART, and carrying case..... 19.50

Total cost per PART, "EUREKA DRAMA," No. Y..... $87.50

Additional would be the expressage from Brooklyn.

The Society would furnish posters, window-cards and free SCENARIO, and would supply the bound SCENARIO for sale in any quantity at one-half retail prices.

PARTS II. and III. would cost exactly the same as the above, the entire THREE PARTS amounting to.....$262.50
With only one Stereopticon, one Rheostat, one Acetylene burner and one Phonograph..... 185.00
Expressage extra. Foreign records..... 25.00 extra.

Any Class of Bible Students desiring it may obtain the Y DRAMA by paying $100.00 down and agreeing to pay the remainder in monthly instalments.

BIBLE STUDENTS' FAMILY OUTFIT

This consists of a phonograph and a choice selection of records from the DRAMA and some musical records. A few of these records might be said to be a little shop-worn, but none of them are bad—most of them are strictly new. They are priced so as to bring them within reach of many of our readers who could not afford to purchase the regular DRAMA, but who would like to have some of the records for their own family use and for such of the public as might choose to hear our most wonderful records.

The entire outfit represents a choice selection of twenty of the short lectures of the SCENARIO, four beautiful hymns and a disc-phonograph (concealed horn)—all for $12, or if all new, $15. Expressage extra.

Carrying case for phonograph.....$1.50 extra
" " " records..... 1.25 "

DRAMA MUSIC RECORDS

The musical records used with the moving pictures of CREATION DRAMA were greatly admired. We have some on hand that were slightly used and some quite new. We will supply these, while they last, at half price.

NO NATIONAL PREJUDICES

MY DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

It is after several months of considering and praying over the matter, that I have decided to write these lines: In advance I wish to say that I am writing as a Christian brother, and that there is no malice or ill-will in my action. I would surely not add to your burden. I am going to write of what appears to me unfairness and injustice in your articles in THE WATCH TOWER about the war. It is incomprehensible why I should find this in a man who is not merely a Christian, but, as I believe, that "faithful servant," of whom Christ spoke.

In many articles since the beginning of the war, now 14 months ago, you have referred to this event, which I consider not only proper, but necessary, as it again shows the accuracy of the Word of the Lord. You have shown that human civilization is a hollow boast. So it is. You have drawn attention to the horrible perversion of Bible texts. To all this a Christian can only most emphatically agree. You have adduced, in showing this, the offenses of Great Britain, the hypocrisy of British and Canadian ministers. This is right. I have read of other perversions by the Bishop of London and other chaplains at the front, which have made me sick to the heart. The more fearlessly you do this, the better.

But even before the war you were in the habit of citing British sins as illustrations of evil. The oppressing of Israel by the Philistines and other Gentile nations is constantly made clear by references to British rule in India, for instance.

The Lord probably does not approve of that rule as it is carried out. Does he approve of American rule in the Philippines or in the Indian reservation in the States? And what about the oppression of the natives in German S. W. Africa and East Africa? The methods in German S. W. Africa, which finally drove the Herreoos into rebellion, were so atrocious, as was the war of extermination that followed, that even so patient a body of slaves as the German Reichstag could not swallow it. Were these matters not equally illustrated or were they perhaps too fiendish?

Although Count von Bülow has publicly declared that war is one of the fundamental principles of the scheme of God, it is not so according to the Bible. It is purely a human affair, and as such I would waste no time to discuss it. But it is not wrong to mention its various features, as you do, in connection with the Word of God. And here, month after month, you continue as before the war. Poor old England has to supply the proof; noble Germany is persistently not mentioned. Could you not possibly draw occasionally upon German crimes and German perversions of the Bible to illustrate points? Is there any doubt in your mind that Germany not only started this war, but even engineered it? Did she really create such a war machine and glorify war, merely for parades at Potsdam? You dwell on the "frightfulness and destructiveness" of this war; but you never mention the demon who started it. Why not? With love in Christ,

Your fellow servant, W. M. HAHNNEMANN.—*Canada.*

REPLY OF EDITOR

We appreciate the above letter, and promptly explain that any apparent unfairness was quite unintentional. We are far from thinking of Great Britain as the worst nation in the world. On the contrary, we esteem the British and the North American peoples at the head of the list for human progress and civilization. American by birth, British by ancestry, it is only natural that the Editor should appreciate highly the standards of his own race. But this does not, and should not, blind him to injustice and perfidy. If he has sought more to correct these than the evils of other nations, it is because THE WATCH TOWER, published in the English, has less opportunity of reaching or of assisting people of other tongues.

It is far from our thought that the German Kaiser and the Russian Czar are the Lord's mouth-pieces and agents, and their warriors soldiers of Christ. We know that this is their claim. We have already pointed out the fallacy of such claims, and have shown that the delusion came from the dark ages. First the clergy separated themselves from the people, whom they styled laity. Having thus exalted themselves, they claimed that the kingdom of God had been set up and that the church was reigning. First through the Popes, and afterwards through the Protestant denominations, the kingdoms of earth were told that they were God's kingdoms, whose duty it was to defend the church and to oppose heresy. For centuries the domination of the church has been growing less; but the kingdoms have maintained their power; and doubtless many of the rulers believe that they are God's appointees in his kingdom.

Each nation in this war seems to believe itself God's favored people, whose ultimate mission is to rule the world. They are all in error. They are all on the verge of collapse. They are all to go down speedily, as soon as Messiah shall take to himself his great power and begin his reign. As the Bible declares, they shall be broken into shivers as the potter's vessel, ground to powder, as pictured in Daniel's vision, and no place ever afterwards will be theirs; they shall be as though they had not been.

We are not without sympathy for all these peoples; for we perceive that they are all blinded by the adversary, as are also their rulers. We have no sympathy with their atrocities, however; and we recognize war in general as devilish anywhere, everywhere, and as having a brutalizing effect upon all engaged in it.

We are glad that in this war personal atrocities (aside from the legalized atrocity of war) have not been proven against the British and the French, although substantiated against the Russians, who, besides devastating everything, deliberately shot non-combatants, gouged out the eyes of German soldiers, and put buttons into the sockets, etc., etc. Quite possibly those barbarous Russians were incensed by something that the Germans had done against them. For instance, it is well authenticated that the Germans decoyed a Russian army of thirty thousand into a swamp, from which they could not extricate themselves. The narrative declares that nearly three hundred of the German soldiers went insane that night from the hearing of the cries and curses of the poor Russians floundering and dying in that swamp.

We have no apology to make for the semi-barbarous Turks either, and think quite probable that atrocities reported against them are true. At the beginning of the war, the Germans were charged with atrocities in connection with the Belgians—with destroying an entire town and many of its non-combatant inhabitants. But the answer came, showing that there was a measure of excuse; that the people of that town had in the night in various ways sought to poison, to stab and to maim the Germans, who were in full possession. The Germans, in self-defense and by way of teaching a lesson, retaliated.

We sympathize, too, with the Belgians, for they realized that their little kingdom was suffering from an unlawful invasion on the part of a stronger neighbor. They did not understand the rules of war, and felt justified in doing anything for the protection of their national liberties. They were unwise in this, and suffered.

We do not defend Germany's invasion of Belgium. It was no more right than all the land-grabbing practised by other nations previously. What European nation has thoroughly clean hands in Africa, India, China? Each nation, in stealing the government and the liberties of other peoples, has been violating the Golden Rule of justice; but each has claimed that in so doing it not only advanced its own welfare, but really brought greater blessings to the conquered people. And we presume that Germany would make a similar claim. In reality, it is pride and selfishness which is behind all the land-grabbing of the great nations, and not a benevolent influence and a benevolent attempt to bless the families of the earth. It will be Messiah's kingdom that will really bless all people unselfishly and for their highest welfare.

THE REAL CAUSE OF THE WAR

The present war, as all well-informed people know, has been brewing for forty years. Ever since Germany defended herself successfully against the French and took two French Provinces as part of her indemnity, the French have been bent on reprisal—revenge. With but half the population of Germany a French army has been maintained for forty years on a war footing, sometimes in greater numbers than the German army, which also has been kept in a state of high military efficiency necessary to its defense. Meantime, Russia, as the friend of France, organized an immense army. Well-informed people have known for years that these two nations were intent upon crushing Germany at the first favorable opportunity.

The Germans felt that their very existence depended upon maintaining a strong military organization, capable of combating foes on both sides. Meantime economy, and efficiency and wisdom controlling wonderfully, has cemented the German people and made them a rich and powerful nation. The once rude, clumsy, stupid German youth not only served his term drilling as a soldier, but at the same time, got his schooling. This has lifted the German people out of the rut of centuries and made them one of the brightest peoples of the world. The eyes of the world are only opening to these things which the war is demonstrating.

Meantime, as German thrift and management brought prosperity, German commerce increased, German merchant vessels and steamship lines all over the world were practically the only rivals of the British, who, for centuries, have been masters of the sea. With a growing commerce, Germany not unnaturally craved a proportionate navy. Her ambition for commerce and for a navy have brought on this war. France and Russia feared to undertake a war, and have procrastinated for years. Great Britain feared to lose her proud place as mistress of the sea, and considered it necessary that Germany be not allowed to become a greater rival. British diplomacy encouraged Russia and France, and led them to believe that they would have British support in the war.

Germany recognized that the mobilization of the Russian army in defense of Serbia was the beginning of the national plot of forty years' standing for the destruction of Germany. She realized that if she waited until the French armies had mobilized on her western border, and the Russian army on her eastern border, she would be at a disadvantage. Her predetermined plan in self-defense was that she would smite one of her foes first and then the other. Her railways, etc., had all been arranged with this in view. She hoped in British assurances, yet, nevertheless, was fearful of what came—British declaration of war, ostensibly in defense of Belgium, but really in fear of Germany's growing greatness—in fear that Britain might some day lose her boasted rule of the seas.

While we deprecate the German method of submarine warfare and its exposure of neutrals and non-combatants, we should not forget that the Germans in turn are in desperate

straits—surrounded by nations three times their size and these nations seeking, additionally, to cut off Germany's food supplies and thus to starve the German non-combatants. What is there commendable about war anyway, even if it could be staged as a prize-fight with the usual prize-ring rules and regulations!

SEEN FROM THE BIBLICAL STANDPOINT

So, dear Brother, understand us as sympathizing with the purblind peoples engaged in this terrible war—each fearful, each jealous, each envious of the other, and none of them knowing, understanding, the Gospel of the kingdom—of Messiah's Millennial reign, now at the door. Understand us also to be fully out of sympathy with submarines, dreadnoughts, armored biplanes and Zeppelins, mines, rapid fire guns, great and small. It is time, however, that the whole world recognized that much of our boasted civilization is not Christianity, nor built upon the foundations of Christianity; and that, therefore, it is giving way to the better conditions of Messiah's kingdom. Soon the resurrection "change" will perfect the elect church of Christ, and qualify them as kings and priests and judges of the world. Soon Messiah's empire will begin its sway. Soon all these Gentile kingdoms will pass away forever. And this is what we mean —the passing of earthly empires—when we pray, "Thy kingdom come!"

There is nothing kind, loving or Godlike about war. It is fiendish, devilish. The men now at the front are being hardened, brutalized and prepared for the revolution and anarchy which the Bible points out will follow the war. Whoever thinks of war as a kid-glove affair, and expects great politeness from the belligerents, is unwise and will continually be disappointed. Moreover, it is to be remembered that all officers and great men will, publicly at least, throw their influence against all forms of barbarism; but in the rank and file of every army are to be found individuals who continually need watching, that they should not bring their comrades to disgrace. And even such discipline cannot always be enforced when men of the dare-devil kind are needed, and when entire regiments need to be plied with intoxicating liquors in order to make them sufficiently reckless to undertake a charge in the face of almost certain death.

TOO MUCH MONEY—FURTHER OFFERINGS REFUSED

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of March 1, 1911, which please see.]

INTERESTING LETTERS

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT TRUST IN HIM"

OUR BELOVED PASTOR RUSSELL:—

The September 1st WATCH TOWER has just arrived and I do not know how to express the encouragement I feel in the reading of the first article on the "Christian's Duty and the War." As you know, no doubt, there has been a form of Census taken here in England, and many of the dear friends have been much exercised as to what they ought to do if Conscription should come.

In reference to those of military age, my dear husband (who with myself has had the glorious knowledge of the Truth of God's Word for nine years) is of military age, and I have assured him that I should be proud of him (if he were compelled to go) to know he had been shot as a traitor (according to this world's opinion) rather than feel he had taken human life, because I should know he had been faithful to "his King"—the King of Glory. The knowledge that he had finished his course and entered into the joys of his Lord would be just another link to draw me closer to the Lord, although the extent of the loss of his companionship only the Lord would know.

So strong do I feel, dear Brother, about having no part or lot if I can help it with this war, that when our son, a lad of 16, kept pressing the matter to us of going to sea on a passenger liner, I gave way very willingly, whereas not long ago I had been very much opposed to the thought on account of the great risks they are running; for I feel I would rather know he had gone down by a torpedo, etc., than know he had taken human life, for although so young he was continually being badgered to join the army and told he could say he was 19, and when the news came that there was to be a registration and that he might be taken for making ammunition, I looked away from the present things and thought of the glorious beyond, when all should hear his voice and come forth from Sheol.

When I tell you, dear Brother, that he is our only son, and very, very dear to us both (our other one, a dear little lad of 5½ years, the Father has graciously hidden—"until the wrath be overpast"—for four years now), you may know that we needed the Lord's strength to let him go; but if we never meet again we are assured that "All things are working together for good."

I feel so glad you have made it clearer as regard the actually going into the trenches and firing, because I felt all along that if I were a brother I could not agree to the thought of accepting the uniform, taking the oath, etc., and then, if one was refused a place at the base or hospital and compelled to go into the trenches, to refuse to fire. To my mind it would not be rendering to Caesar the things that are his. I felt it would be more honest to say, "No, I refuse to take human life"; and then if they said I should be shot—well I would take it that it was the Lord's will.

The present happenings in England are calculated to unnerve many, for one never knows when he goes to bed at night whether a bomb will strike the house. But we that have put our trust in the Lord can rest peacefully, knowing that he is in charge. One dear sister who rents a room and lives alone had the awful experience of a bomb striking the house she was in, and the whole of the room, except where her bed stood, was utterly destroyed, and she herself came through without a scratch. On the following day (Sunday) she gave a splendid testimony to the friends, and told them that the same God who had cared for her would also take care of them, and if it was his will they should finish their course that way, what matter; they were only going home to see their dear Father and elder Brother. Poor dear! Her face showed the strain of her ordeal; but she had not a bitter feeling towards the Germans; she just said she had dropped them over into the Millennium for judgment.

Now, dear Brother, I am afraid this is a very lengthy letter, but I felt I wanted you to know how the Lord is blessing your labor of love in ministering to his people. May he give you grace and strength to press on until you see him face to face. With our united love,

I am your sister by His grace,

NELLIE BUCKNER.—*England.*

"BEWARE OF WOLVES"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

For some time it has been on my mind to write you respecting a matter which I believe properly claims your attention, but other interests of the work have delayed the matter.

Just before crossing the State line of Illinois, heading westward, I learned that a man representing himself to be a brother in the truth had visited some of the classes in the country, stating that he was formerly an attache of the Headquarters in Brooklyn, but had been "sent forth with the seventy." I do not remember the name, but undoubtedly it was fictitious. He wanted assistance to get further westward, where he had friends and where he could find work, etc. The "loan" was made, but that was the last seen or heard of this individual in the form of a man.

In western Kansas I learned of an almost identical case, save that there were somewhat more details given, which enabled me at once to detect the fraud. In each case it was the isolated who were "worked." In the Kansas incident the individual stated that he had put all the money that he had into the work; but that everything was closing down at Brooklyn, so he had been "sent forth," and without money. The story he told did not correspond with the facts as I knew them to be at Headquarters, so I quickly detected that it was a confidence game that was being systematically worked. Among other misstatements was one to the effect that he had worked in the "bindery" at Brooklyn, but the Society was no longer publishing the STUDIES, so the "bindery" had closed down. and he among others had to be set adrift, etc. Like the Illinois case he too wanted to get further west, where he had friends and where he expected to find work. He made the "touch" and got away.

Now none of the friends who assisted these individuals were in a position to do so; but out of their goodness of heart they denied themselves to help, as they supposed, a truth brother. Besides, what they have is consecrated to the Lord. So it was really the Lord's money that these frauds

obtained. It occurred to me that you might consider this of sufficient importance to sound a warning through THE WATCH TOWER.

Again I wish to report that I find the general conditions in the field most encouraging. While the friends are restful, they are not sleepy, but rather are "waiting on the Lord," with "full assurance of faith" that he who has begun the good work is still at the helm and will finish the same in his own "due time." I find the friends growing in grace, zeal and love, and in joyous expectancy of a glorious change soon —very soon. The class conditions, as I have noted them, are an inspiration to me, spurring me on to renewed zeal and more determined efforts to have my sacrifice consumed, while it is called day.

I cannot close without again assuring you of my ever increasing love and abiding confidence in you as the Lord's specially chosen servant to bring forth meat in due season for such as have partaken sufficiently of the "bitter herbs" to have their appetites sharpened so they can relish the "table prepared by the Lord."

By his kind favor, your brother and fellow servant, with warmest love in the Lord, W. M. WISDOM.

ABOUT DIVIDING CLASSES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In June 1 WATCH TOWER, 1915, page 2, you speak of the division of the Berean classes, when they number more than twenty, and say that this same rule, you believe, would be found advantageous for the prayer meeting. A few of our class want the Wednesday meeting divided, but have said nothing as to the other classes being divided. I am sure that we all want to do the will of our dear Lord. Was it your thought that the classes should be divided regardless of the will of the majority?

REPLY BY THE EDITOR

Everything in THE WATCH TOWER and in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, etc., should be understood as advice—nothing as commanded. We hold that only the Lord and the twelve apostles (St. Paul taking the place of Judas) have the right to command the people of God. Others, including the Editor, have merely the right to advise. And such advice should always be accompanied by either a Scriptural citation or an explanatory reason.

In recommending to the classes of Bible Students throughout the world that classes be divided when they number over twenty, we were following this rule—merely giving advice. There being no Scripture for this, we submitted our reasons: That large classes cannot so efficiently participate in the lessons and, therefore, cannot be expected to reap as large a blessing from them. We hold that in every Wednesday evening Testimony meeting a special blessing comes to all who participate; and very similarly, that in the Berean classes participation sharpens interest and deepens the impressions, and thus enlarges the blessings to be derived.

However, in every case it is for the class itself to decide, and that by a majority vote, whether in their case the class shall be divided or not. There might be reasons why a general rule might not apply in some particular cases because offset by other conditions. Be it always understood that according to the divine arrangement as given us in the Bible, the class itself decides every question. And only the consecrated ones constitute the class proper, although the pleasure of the unconsecrated who may attend might well be considered by the consecrated when voting.

While each class might be considered an ecclesia, or church, by itself and entirely independent of every other class, nevertheless unity and fellowship are very desirable, and the various classes in one city may very appropriately be united in one ecclesia, or church, thus deriving the benefits of occasional joint meetings, joint fellowship and participation in the joint arrangement in the selection of servants—elders and deacons. In thus uniting, each class, as well as each individual, sacrifices independence for the benefits of co-operation.

AS MOMENTS PASS THE KINGDOM NEARS

Men may sorrow in distress,
Sin-cursed, blind and weary,
Death may rule supreme today—
All things may look dreary:
Make haste, O time; speed on, ye years!
As moments pass, the Kingdom nears.

Saints may "groan within" and suffer
Outward shame, distress, defeat;
Trouble may test faith and patience—
Fiery trials, "furnace heat":
But stop your sighing, dry your tears;
As moments pass, the Kingdom nears.

Men for earth and saints for heaven;
God's decree will surely stand.
Shout for joy, give God the glory!
Safe deliverance is at hand.
Ah, no more doubtings, no more fears,
As moments pass, the Kingdom nears.

J. G. KUEHN.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WAR LEADING TOWARD A CLIMAX

The great war continues to rage. More and more all the nations are being dragged into it, as intimated by the Lord through the Prophet. (Jeremiah 25:15-28) One is reminded of St. James' words, "Ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain." "Ye ask [pray] and receive not [answers to your prayers], because ye ask amiss"—selfishly. Again we read, "Go to, ye rich men. Weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you."—James 4:2, 3; 5:1.

Regardless of their branch of the human family, all sincere men must sympathize greatly with the terrible conditions prevailing in Europe. The French are finally awakening to the fact that they are almost exhausted. They have no further reserves to call to the colors. They are patriotically using their money and exhausting their credit. They are convinced that they cannot win, that it will be either devastation or a bargain-peace. They know of no reason whatsoever as to why they are at war with their neighbor. The Italians are in much the same predicament, and are fearing insurrection, anarchy. The Russians are in terrible plight, also. The novelty of the war has worn off. The glory of marching into Berlin has faded. Revolution is threatening. The Balkan nations and Greece are perplexed and fearful under the demands, the entreaties and the threats of the great warring nations, compelling them to participate in the strife or threatening their future existence.

Only Germany and Great Britain realize what the war is about—that it is commercial; that it is for the liberty of the seas and the profits of world commerce. Both of these great and intelligent nations now realize that they have gotten into a struggle ten-fold more severe than they had ever anticipated. Both would like to be out of the war, but both fear the future, realizing that no such combination could ever again be effected. Both are on the verge of financial bankruptcy, and wisely are borrowing as much as they can and seeking to avoid the thought that they could never pay the interest on their debts without risking revolution of their peoples against the heavy taxes that would be necessary.

The warring nations are jealous of America and bitter against her for her neutrality. Americans are snubbed and insulted everywhere in Europe and even in Australia. The best intentions of our President and his own personality are ridiculed—so blind are the poor people in respect to the real issues of the war. Surely things are leading on toward the climax when every man's hand will be against his neighbor and against his brother and when there will be no peace to those who go out or to those who come in.—Ezekiel 38:21; Zechariah 8:10.

WAR NECESSITIES COST LIBERTIES

Few are aware of the extent to which war's necessities are interfering with the liberties of the peoples of Europe. Military necessity is rapidly pushing aside all the rights of the people in the great Magna Charta of British liberty. We are not saying that this is unwise, or that we could do better under the circumstances. We are merely noting the fact that the people are giving up their liberties as one of the costs of the war. In Great Britain large factories are taken over by the Government and turned from peaceful industry to the

manufacture of munitions of war. The employees are required to continue to work the same as before. Other manufacturers and employers are forbidden by the Government to employ anyone who has been connected with these factories taken over by the Government unless the applicant has a full release by the Government. This is difficult to get.

Canada and Australia are being drawn into the whirlpool and are losing their liberties, too. At the beginning of the war it was a question as to what the Canadians and Australians would do to help the mother country—voluntarily. All that condition is changed! Instead, the Government is discussing whether or not it will conscript Canadian and Australian young men and force them into the war. And so great is the change that has come over the people that the right of the mother country in this respect seems not even to be questioned by the majority.

Over and beyond all this, the Government is taking a record of every individual in Canada and Australia, as well as in Great Britain, with full particulars practically including all of the individual's affairs. This is called the War Census Act and recites: "Two things are certain—one, that we must continue to fight with every ounce of energy we possess; the other, that we can do this only by a complete organization of all our resources. By no other means can we continue this life and death struggle.

* * *

"Every pair of hands must be occupied. Every resource must be developed. Every citizen must give to the country in labor and money the utmost of his capacity."

As a further war measure personal liberty is being taken away under what is known as "The Defense of the Realm Act." Under this Act the Government holds absolute control of the press and of the lives and liberties of all the people. A Briton may be arrested and imprisoned for a year or more without even knowing the charge against him or having any opportunity whatever to defend himself—the act of habeas corpus being set aside. This law, now operative in Great Britain, is being extended to the Canadians and Australians, who, apparently, will meekly submit to it. If any one had prophesied such a condition of things three years ago, he would have been counted a fool.

Our Brethren are not anarchistic, surely. Undoubtedly they will seek to be subject to the "powers that be" as long as they be—except wherever their consciences might be impinged.

Needless to say that in Germany and all the other nations at war conditions are much the same, or worse. How long it will be ere our own favored land shall become involved we know not. However,

"Through all the tumult and the strife
We hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in our souls—
How can we keep from singing"—

that the King of Glory is at the door, and that his glorious empire of righteousness and truth is about to be ushered in! Well may we be content with whatever the Lord's providences may mark out for us, knowing that all things will work together for good to those who love him—called ones according to his purpose!

NATIONAL AMITY AFTER THE WAR

Prof. Bertrand Russell, of Cambridge, England, quotes the German historian, Eduard Meyer, that "So far as one can foresee, peace will be only a short truce; England will use the first opportunity of beginning the fight again, better prepared, at the head of a new coalition if not the old one, and a long series of difficult and bloody wars will follow, until at last the definite decision is obtained."

Professor Russell proceeds: "Is it certain that these two nations will continue to fight and hate each other until one of them is utterly broken? Fortunately no country consists wholly of professors, not even Germany; and it may be hoped that more sanity is to be found among those who have not been made mad by much learning. For the moment, both countries are wholly blind to their own faults, and utterly fantastic in the crimes which they attribute to the enemy. A vast but shadowy economic conflict has been invented to rationalize their hostility which, in fact, is as irrational and instinctive as that of dogs who snarl and fly at each other in the street. The cynic who said, 'Speech has been given us to conceal our thoughts,' might well have added, 'Thought has been given us to conceal our passions from ourselves.' At least I am sure that this is true of thought in war-time.

* * *

"France and Russia each has its myth, for without myth no great national upheaval is possible. But their myths are different from ours, whereas the myths of England and Germany are all but identical. Each believes itself a great peace-loving nation, powerful, but always using its power to further worthy ends. Each believes that the other, with an incredible perfidy inspired by the basest jealousy, suddenly stirred up the war, after many years of careful preparation, military in the one case, diplomatic [and naval] in the other. Each believes that only the utter humiliation of the other can secure the peace of the world and the ordered progress of civilization. In each, a pacifist minority urges moderation in the use of victory is the indispensable preliminary to any future reconstruction. Each is absolutely confident of victory, and prepared for any sacrifice, however great, in order to secure victory. Each is unable to believe that the other is sincere in the opinion which it professes; its own innocence and the other's guilt are as clear as noonday, and can be denied only by the most abject hypocrisy.

"Both cannot be right in these opinions, and *a priori* it is not likely that either is right. No nation was ever so virtuous as each believes itself, and none was ever so wicked as each believes the other. If these beliefs survive the war, no peace will be possible. Both nations have concentrated their energies so wholly on making war that they have rendered it almost impossible to make peace. In normal times civilized and humane people find a difficulty in believing that they do well to butcher each other. In order to overcome this feeling, journalists have filled the minds of their readers with such appalling accounts of the enemies' crimes that hatred has come to seem a noble indignation, and it has grown difficult to believe that any of our opponents deserve to live. Yet peace, if it is to be real, must be accomplished by respect, and must bring with it some sense of justice toward rival claims. What these claims are, and what justice demands if they are to be reconciled, must be realized in some degree before the peace, if the peace is to heal the wounds which the war is inflicting.

* *

"When the Germans, with their usual incautious explicitness, hade the announcement, 'Our future is on the sea,' most Englishmen felt, almost without conscious thought, that the Germans might as well have announced that their future lay through the death of England's greatness and the starvation of our population.

* * *

"Because the apprehension was real and deep-seated, the hostility was rather blind and instinctive; although, in the region of conscious thought, the hopes of an understanding were not abandoned, yet in that deeper region out of which effective action springs, the belief in a future conflict had taken root and could no longer be dislodged.

* * *

"The Germans, in spite of their progress, their energy, and their population, are very inferior in colonial possessions, not only to England and Russia, but also to France. This seems to them unjust; but wherever they turn to try to acquire new colonies, England and England's navy block the way, because of our friendship with France, or our sensitiveness about India, or some other interest in the complicated web of our foreign policy.

"German aggressiveness, real and obnoxious as it has become, is the result of experience. Germany cannot, as we do, acquire colonies absent-mindedly, without intention, and almost without effort. When colonies were easier to acquire than they are now, Germany had not yet entered into the competition; and since Germany became a great power, it has been handicapped by naval inferiority and by the necessity of defending two frontiers. It is these accidents of history and geography, rather than innate wickedness, which have produced German aggressiveness. The aims of German policy are closely similar to those which we have always pursued, but its methods cannot be the unobtrusive methods which we have usually adopted, because such methods, in the circumstances, would achieve nothing.

"Colonial ambitions are no doubt one reason why Germany has developed a navy; but another and more imperative reason is the necessity of safeguarding foreign trade.

"In the time of Bismarck, Germany had not yet become a great, industrial nation; it was independent of foreign food, and its exports of manufactures were insignificant. Its industrial expansion dates from the introduction of the Bessemer process in 1879, by which its supplies of iron became possible to work at a profit. From that time onward, German industrial progress has been extraordinarily rapid; more and more, Germany has tended to become dependent, like England, upon the possibility of importing food and exporting manufactures. In this war, as we see, Germany is just able, by

very painful economy to subsist upon the stock of food in the country; but another ten years of such development as was taking place before the war would have made this impossible. High agrarian protection, which alone could have retarded the process, was naturally disliked by the manufacturers and the working classes, and could not be carried beyond a certain point for fear of leading to a triumph of Socialism.

"It thus became obvious that in a few years' time Germany would be liable to defeat by starvation in any war with a superior naval power. In 1900, when the Germans decided to build a great navy, the Triple Alliance was weaker than France and Russia on the sea. The wish not to be inferior to France and Russia is enough to account for the beginnings of the German Navy; the rivalry with us may perhaps have been no part of the original intention, but merely a result of the suspicions produced in England by the German program. However that may be, it ought to have been obvious to the Germans that a strong navy was sure to make us hostile, and would therefore not serve the purposes for which it was intended unless it was stronger than our navy. But it could not be supposed that we should submit to the existence of a navy stronger than our own, unless we had first been utterly and hopelessly defeated; and there was no way of defeating us except by first having a navy stronger than our own.

"For these reasons, the German policy was inherently incapable of success. And yet, without success, all industrial progress and all colonial expansion remain perpetually at England's mercy. If we ask ourselves how we should feel if we were similarly at the mercy of Germany, we shall perhaps begin to understand why the Germans hate us. And yet we can hardly feel any sense of guilt, because a supreme navy is for us a matter of life and death.

"This dilemma must be faced, if we are to understand the conflict of England and Germany; and not regard it as merely due to wickedness on one side or on the other. After the war, sooner or later, exactly the same problem will have to be faced again. The native energy of the Germans cannot be permanently checked by defeat: after a longer or shorter period of recuperation, they will again feel that commercial safety and colonial expansion demand a strong navy, if they are not to be content to live in sufferance and to be compelled to bow to England's will on all occasions of serious dispute. The problem is a new one, since hitherto England has been the only nation dependent for subsistence on food imported by sea, and England has had unquestioned naval supremacy. But if we are to avoid the century of internecine warfare contemplated by Eduard Meyer, we must find some solution of the problem, and not be content merely to hope that, whenever war comes, we shall be victorious. Germany's industrial ambitions, at least, are entirely legitimate; and they alone make some security for German trade an imperative necessity. It is not only justice that makes it necessary to find a solution, but also self-preservation."

WHY CHURCH UNION LAGS

"Anything that even suggests an endeavor to close up divisions of followers of Christ claims favorable countenance from a generous Christian, regardless of whether it appears practicable or not.

"It was doubtless on this presumption that all other Protestant denominations of any consequence in this country responded amiably to the Episcopolian request for committees to be named which should join in summing and organizing this 'world-conference.'

"And these commissions, when named, could not courteously do less than confer with the Episcopalian commission whenever the latter desired. So there have been many meetings and much resolving that it would truly be a beautiful thing if all churches would unite.

"But at the end of every meeting the outcome might be summed up in this—that if the Episcopolians think they can do anything with such a world-conference, they are welcome to go ahead and do it. . . .

"What's the reason? Why aren't the other churches aroused?

"Is it because other churches don't want union? Not if they understand themselves. But it is for another reason, which is hard to say under bonds of common courtesy.

"Nevertheless, no relation between parties standing at different view-points can be substantial without frankness. The time has come when frankness is needed on this subject. So here is the plain truth:

"The reason why other churches have not taken up enthusiastically the Episcopalian proposals for a world-wide congress on the union of Christendom is simply because they have not yet seen reason to believe that Episcopalians in general want unity enough to make concessions to procure it."

"The Continent."

"WINNING OF IMMORTALITY"

Prof. Frederick Palmer, A.B., D.D., Harvard Divinity Faculty, in his book entitled "The Winning of Immortality" says: "I have endeavored to sketch the growth of the doctrine of a future life from its appearance in Hebrew history through the line of Christian development to the present time. In doing this we come upon the fact that the belief which was counted orthodox in the first Christian centuries was different in one notable respect from that generally counted orthodox today. For while we regard it proper and Christian to hold that immortality is necessarily inherent in humanity, this was then regarded as improper and unchristian, the only true Christian view being that immortality was a victorious prize to be won through fellowship with Christ.

"I cannot but think that their orthodoxy was wiser than ours. For I am sure that one great deterrent to believing in a future life is, with many persons, the dread thought of the vast multitudes, the majority of mankind, according to some theologies, who, it is asserted, are condemned to conscious existence in wretchedness and torture forever. Such must be the result if perpetual existence is a necessity inherent in humanity. But if it is contingent; if the soul is not necessarily immortal, but may become so; if the failure to attain immortality proceeds along ordinary non-arbitrary lines, and reaches a result which we see here imaged in the gradual elimination of decadent life, then the processes of the next world are redeemed from horror and made intelligible, almost veritable.

"Immortality as a necessity seems to me to have little to say for itself. As a goal to be attained, it is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

(Preface pp. 9-11.)

"PLATO MISTAKEN FOR CHRIST"

S. D. McConnell, D.D., D.C.L., Rector of All Souls Church, New York, in his book, "The Evolution of Immortality," states:

"A careful study of the ante-Nicene 'Fathers' can but convince one that in and among them a number of ethnic notions were struggling to express, each in its own terms, the truth which Christ had dropped among them. The early Christians had all been reared either in the religions of Judea or Greece or Rome. Those among them who had been reared Jews unconsciously transferred their idea of a corporate or tribal immortality from their old faith to their new, and their imaginations were filled with the hope of a 'second coming' and a 'New Jerusalem.'

"Those who were Greeks brought to the new religion the Platonic idea that the individual soul is indestructible, being in fact an articulate portion of the substance of the mind of God. Those of Roman antecedents, having no inherited belief of a future life of any kind, were better prepared to comprehend the truth of Christ. The interaction of all these fragments of previous philosophy produced a confusion and uncertainty of mind which was not clarified for five centuries. Then the masterful Augustine, the man who fixed the lines in which the thought of the civilized world ran from the sixth century to the nineteenth, took Plato's doctrine of the inherent immortality of the soul, disengaged it from metempsychosis and transmigration, and gained for it a general credence which it has held to this day." (Pages 45, 46.)

"Tertullian in his treatises On the Soul and On the Resurrection of the Flesh gives by far the fullest presentation of what was commonly believed in his circles; but it is quite impossible to make him consistent with himself or with other Christian writers of the same period. Upon the whole, however, he leaves the impression, afterwards confirmed and fixed by Augustine, that he believes the soul to have an independent existence of its own, and to be of its own nature indestructible. The truth of the case seems to be that as the Greek influence gained the domination in the early church the Platonic doctrine of a natural immortality which it brought with it came to be accepted. The notion was withstood from the beginning as being subversive of the very essence of Christianity. Theophilus (Ad Autolycum II. 27), Irenaeus (Adv. Haeres. II. 34), Clement of Alexandria (The Pedagogues, I. 3), Arnobius (Cont. Gent. II. 24), and most weighty of all, Athanasius in his treatise on the Incarnation of the Word of God, all strenuously fought against it as a Pagan error which brought to naught the work of Christ.

"They were defeated, however, and the conception prevailed which is vulgarly current today, of an immortal soul and a mortal body, temporarily joined, then severed, then reunited in an imperishable personality. Its currency has probably confused and obstructed the work of Christ among men more

than all other obstacles combined. A Pagan speculation has masqueraded so long as an elemental Christian truth that now, when the intelligent world is well disposed to receive and comprehend Jesus' revelation of a life to come, Plato stands across the path and is commonly mistaken for Christ." (Pages 47, 48.)

PROPER BASIS OF HONOR IN THE CHURCH

Question.—Matthew 20:27 reads, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Is it a proper desire to be chief among the Lord's people, and are we to understand that the positions in the kingdom of heaven will be assigned entirely on the basis of the amount of service we render here?

Answer.—The Lord had been pointing out to his disciples a certain weakness on their part—a desire to be the greatest—a desire that is general in the human family—an ambitious spirit. The context says that amongst the Gentiles there are some who exercise a lordship and have others to serve them in a menial way, but that this was not to be the case amongst the disciples of Jesus. They were to be actuated by a different spirit. With the followers of Christ there is not to be a spirit to dominate, to rule others, but a spirit of love, which seeks to serve others, to do for others, a spirit which is willing to sacrifice personal interest in the service of others.

On this basis we consider further the words of this text. There will be some among the Lord's people who will be chief. It is necessarily so in any company or class or association where people are not all equal in talents—where some are born with more talents and some with less. Some one is bound to be chief. An absolute equality is not possible.

It is advisable, too, that there be some among the saints of God to guide the church. What, then, is to be the standard as to who is to be chief? Shall it be the one who would browbeat the others? No; this is not the standard. Shall it be one who will have a masterful influence and pleasant words, who will dominate merely because of some talent, or because of superior education or wealth—something of this kind? No; this could not be the standard. What, then, will be the standard as to those who will be recognized as chief ones in the Church?

HAVE NO AMBITION FOR PERSONAL GLORY

We reply, We should look for those who have most of the spirit of service. He who renders the greatest amount of service and brings the greatest spiritual blessing to the class—the one who tries most to truly serve—consider him your chief. While our Lord's words were addressed to all the Apostles, and not merely to one individual, yet they are applicable also to the individual. The thought should come home to each of our hearts, that if any of us have ambition for service in some special capacity, we are not to do like worldly people. We should take the opposite track, and leave any honor of men out of the question entirely. We should leave God to attend to that matter as shall seem to him best, and be content merely to be a servant to the brethren. Let the Lord see how willing you are to serve in any manner.

The person without any ambition never amounts to anything. We need to have ambition if we are sowing or plowing or whatever we are doing—we need ambition to spur us on to do whatever we do in a satisfactory manner. And so if we have the opportunity of serving the truth, we should seek to serve it in the most capable manner possible. Otherwise we should not be capable servants of the Lord.

But we are to lay aside any desire to be chief so far as ambition for personal glory is concerned. We are to seek to serve the Lord the best we know how. If you can serve the Lord in some respects better than I, and I can learn something from you, well and good. And if afterwards you can learn something from me, so be it. True, we should be patterning after that which is especially commendable and doing all we can to further the Lord's cause. And this service should be prompted by love. Any service not prompted by love is not acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

HUMILITY A PRIME REQUISITE

The Apostle Paul says that those who desire the office of a bishop are desiring a good thing. It is a noble service. This office in the Apostles' day was not the exalted official position it is understood to be in the nominal church systems of today. A bishop then was a humble, untitled servant of the church, caring for the interests of the sheep. Every servant of the church should seek to be efficient, should love to be, as far as he is able, a caretaker over the flock of God. Amongst these elder brethren, pastors of the congregation, there will be those of different natural abilities. Each should seek to use his talents, his opportunities, in the service of the Lord, of the brethren and of the truth.

It is a pity that any of the Lord's people today forget the standard which the Master is here setting up. These seem to think that the office of elder has become theirs by right, instead of realizing that the appointment to this office is by vote of the ecclesia, the company of the Lord's people, and is to be the voice of the church. We believe that the attitude of each one should be to be willing to accept the voice of the ecclesia, the church, implicitly. If he has become a member of the congregation by casting in his lot with the others, he has thus become subject to the rules that represent the controlling majority, whether it be a majority of one of or a larger per cent. Having done this, he should seek to continue in this attitude, whether chosen an elder or whether another is chosen.

Very freqently a congregation makes the mistake of selecting for elder a brother who does not have the proper qualifications. This sometimes means dissatisfaction on the part of some of the class, and leads to the breaking away of some to form another class. We think this is not the wise course. We think that if the class made a mistake, the Lord is able to overrule it for good; and that therefore those who withdraw lose some experiences which would be valuable to them.

We are not always sure, however, that the class made a mistake. How can we know but that the Lord has some lesson in this matter? If we have asked the Lord's blessing on whoever would be the choice, we should abide by that choice. If the one not chosen has ability for properly presenting the truth and knows a number of places where he can be used and useful, we think that the brother should take advantage of whatever opportunities may present themselves. He need not leave the class, however. He could perform whatever service came to his hand. Perhaps he could use his time and talent in class Extension work—not feeling restricted in this direction because he was not elected elder. He might go out and find opportunities for service. So the change in elders might mean to the brother not elected or not re-elected that the Lord was indicating to him another field of usefulness. The Lord's providences might be leading out for wider influence and usefulness for him.

We should not be influenced by what men of the world shall say or think of us. This is immaterial; and it is immaterial what the church shall think. We should seek to please the Lord. We should not esteem ourselves too highly, but rather give a preference to others in our estimation. Positions in the kingdom of heaven, we understand, will be awarded according to the degree of the development of the fruits of the holy Spirit; and this means a love which will lead to zeal in the Lord's service.

SELECTION OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

Numerous inquiries have come to us indicating that some of the brethren have difficulty in applying the suggestions given in Vol. VI. on the subject of election of servants for the classes.

It was not our thought there to lay down an invariable rule on the subject. The Bible gives none, and no one else has a right to establish such a rule. Our suggestion was that whenever possible the election should be unanimous, and unless seventy-five per cent of the class, or more, favored a brother's election, it would be rather unwise for him to accept the office—the service. We did not by this mean that a minority of twenty-five or thirty per cent should be encouraged to obstruct the class and hinder an election.

Strictly speaking, a majority of one in a class would decide any matter except as love might come in to urge a consideration of the sentiments of others. If for instance, a class numbered one hundred, fifty-one would have a right to decide respecting who should be the servants of the church, and the other forty-nine should very quietly acquiesce, recognizing the fact that they constitute only a minority, and should loyally strive to support the will of the majority.

Only the spirit of love and the best interests of all in the class suggests more than fifty-one per cent. Love should strive for a unanimous vote. But how might this be obtained?

Suppose that in a class of one hundred, six elders were considered as necessary for the service. A, B. C, D, E, F, would represent available candidates of more or less ability. A might have a hundred votes; B, ninety; C, eighty; D, seventy; E. sixty; F. fifty. Under a strict voting on the lines of preference only two would be selected on a ninety per cent basis; but our thought would be that the entire six might be unanimously elected, if they were on the average as good material as the class possessed, and if nothing were known derogatory to their moral character.

It is a mistake to think that the standards established by St. Paul are to be taken literally, for no one would be found fully up to all the requirements. The Apostle has stated what the ideal elder would be. Each voter should have this ideal before his mind in thinking of the will of the Lord; but the class is not to be left without an elder unless there are serious blemishes.

Our Lord similarly set a perfect example before us when he said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) Who is perfect in the sense that God is perfect? "There is none righteous; no, not one." (Romans 3:10) The Master evidently meant that we should not measure ourselves by a low standard, but by the perfect standard, that thus we would be assisting ourselves up to the grandest ideals in those chosen to be elders and examples to the flock.

Be it always remembered that none are to vote except those professing full consecration, manifested by the usual symbol —immersion in water. Such as have not symbolized their consecration, are not to be disowned as brethren; but should be considered so immature as not to be competent to express an opinion in respect to who would be qualified to serve the church, and, of course, would not be qualified to be servants themselves.

RE THE VOW

Another question which here and there is obtruding itself is, Should any one be chosen as a servant of the church who has not taken the special vow which so many of us have found very helpful, and which has been recommended to all?

We cannot make this simple vow a test of brotherhood; for, even though we believe that the Lord has especially brought it forth at this time and that to a certain extent he intends it to serve as a test amongst the consecrated, nevertheless the Bible does not authorize us to make this a test of brotherhood. It is a matter of judgment rather than of divine direction, just as the candidate's misuse of the English language, or uncouthness of manner might properly enough be taken into consideration, although not mentioned in the Bible amongst the qualifications for eldership.

It would rejoice us greatly to know that all the dear elders and deacons amongst the Lord's people everywhere could see eye to eye with respect to the reasonableness of the vow, and its harmony with the divine Word and with our consecration vow, to which it is as it were, a blue fringe, or border and finish. One can scarcely refrain from wondering what objection any Christian brother or sister could have to that vow. To some of us it seems as though it would imply either something wrong as respects their heart intentions or something defective in their reasoning faculties. However, we are not competent to judge so closely. The Master said, "Judge not."

Our thought is that in selecting elders or deacons a preference might well be given to those who have taken the vow and who see eye to eye on this subject. Nevertheless, if the brethren who are competent to lead classes are acceptable in every other way and are not opposers of the vow, they might be chosen. This would be especially true of those who declare that they are living up to all the requirements of the vow to the best of their ability, and merely decline to take it because of fear that somehow or other the taking of this simple vow might injure them while helping others. We may not understand the processes of their reasoning nor the attitude of their hearts, but we may under such circumstances pass over what we cannot understand nor appreciate.

COLPORTEURS AND DRAMA WORKERS

It seems very wonderful to us that, notwithstanding the fact that there are nearly nine millions of copies of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, in twenty different languages in the hands of the public, the demand continues as it does. Our output for August was over twenty thousand copies.

We have recently heard of a colporteur who felt a little hesitancy about selling STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in view of their reference to the year 1914, and who, therefore, turned his attention to the sale of SCENARIOS. In our opinion the brother took a wrong view of matters. STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES are not prophecies. The fact that our expectations respecting the "change" of the church in 1914 were not realized does not signify that the prophecies failed. Our readers should know that we never prophesied anything. We merely gave our opinions respecting prophecies and gave the reader the reasons for those opinions, showing the chapter and verse. Nothing in the Bible declared that the church would be glorified by the fall of 1914. The author did express it as his opinion that the church would be glorified by the time, and gave his reasons for so thinking. Now that the date has passed and the church is not glorified, the author is not disappointed. All the while he wished the Lord's will to be done and none other.

What the Scriptures did clearly seem to teach, and what we did seek positively to affirm, was that, so far as the Bible chronology would show, the times of the Gentiles would expire with the fall of 1914. Some time ago we pointed out that this expiration of the times of the Gentiles need not be understood that they would be dispossessed at that date, but rather that their dispossession proceedings might be expected to begin. (See also THE WATCH TOWER, July 1, 1904, article on Universal Anarchy.) We gave the illustration of a lease of property. At the expiration of the lease the tenant should move; but, if he still seek to retain possession, the owner of the property is justified in taking forcible possession and in putting out the tenant and all his belongings.

This seems to be the course of events as respects the nations of the world. They do not recognize the times in which we are living—that the new dispensation has been ushered in, and that the time has come for Messiah to take control of earth's affairs. The kings of earth would laugh at any suggestion that they should resign their thrones and kingdoms to Messiah. The bearer of such a message would probably be looked upon as a lunatic. The Lord, instead of sending such a useless message, has begun dispossession proceedings. He is allowing the nations to rage against each other, to weaken each other, to destroy each other's property, to humiliate each other. Thus the winds of strife in the present war are leading on to the great social earthquake; and it, in turn, will lead to the fiery cataclysm of anarchy, that in due time, as St. Paul declares, everything may be removed that is shakable, in order that Messiah's kingdom, which is unshakable, may be fully established.—Hebrews 12:27-29.

As for the time for the completion of the Church, we do not know it and never claimed to know it. We merely expressed the opinion that it would occur some time before the greatest violence of the great time of trouble. We still think the same, and expect that the church, the antitypical Elijah, will all have passed beyond the veil before the anarchy predicted in the Bible.

SUGGESTIONS TO COLPORTEURS

The great war now raging in Europe seems to be the beginning of the end of Gentile Times. Instead of feeling ashamed or discouraged, we feel the reverse. We are applying now the words of our Master, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh." (Luke 21:28) Any who are not rejoicing, but who, on the contrary, are feeling discouraged, despondent and disappointed and ashamed of the truth, have evidently wrong impressions. Such should speedily correct such impressions and begin to share in the rejoicing that the Savior counseled, and should begin to share in the great opportunities offered for the serving out of the truth. Surely there never was a time of greater soul-hunger amongst mankind in respect to the Word of God! We know nothing so good to give them as the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, In our opinion they need no change nor alteration.

It is not necessary for us to print something and insert it in the books saying that our expectations of the "change" of the Church before October, 1914, did not come true, for sensible people would not need such a notice. They would see that that suggestion or expectation had not been realized. But they would see also that the expectation based upon the prophetic Word is being realized. We are in the days of the Son of Man. The nations are angry, and shortly his wrath will come. Then the various other steps leading on to the full accomplishment of the great blessing of Messiah's kingdom will be in order. We urge the colporteurs, therefore, not to permit any misconception or false shame to interfere with their scattering of the only literature in the world that gives an accurate and reasonable account of the Bible program, and that has shown in advance experiences upon which the world has already begun to enter.

* * *

Nevertheless, we have no objection whatever to any colporteur changing from the sale of the STUDIES over to the sale of the DRAMA SCENARIO, if he prefers it. It is merely a question of which you make your specialty. If selling the STUDIES you do well to call attention before leaving to the SCENARIO advising the great value of it for children, as well as for

adults. It is written in simple language. Its ninety-six lectures are brief, condensed, pointed, in simple language and interesting to everybody. No better book could possibly be put into the hands of Christian parents from which to teach their children something respecting creation and the Bible in an interesting and historical way.

Likewise, those who specialize with the SCENARIO should, of course, inquire on every suitable occasion if the STUDIES are in the home and are being read and found helpful. So doing, especially when delivering the SCENARIO, you might be the means of removing prejudice and of deepening interest.

PRICE OF SCENARIOS

When the SCENARIOS were gotten out, it was not our thought that they would ever be colporteured; hence no special colporteur price was arranged for. At the request of colporteurs, we have fixed a retail price on them now as follows:

The paper-bound edition in three parts.....$0.30
" cloth- " " red edges..... .68
" DeLuxe " gild edged, fine paper, .98

Or, because we have a large quantity of these on hand, colporteurs may sell them at $0.89.

We will supply these books to the Colporteurs as follows:

The paper-bound sets.....$0.10
" 68-cent, cloth edition..... .25
" DeLuxe edition (to get rid of large stock) will go below cost until it is reduced, namely, .38

These prices do not include postage or freight or expressage. These prices are open to any of the Colporteurs regularly enrolled—or to any of the Bible Students' classes, or in quantities of not less than twelve to any WATCH TOWER subscriber.

Our thought is that the numerous illustrations of these books make them very attractive to the public. We find that nearly all who purchase them read them, which is sometimes not the case with the STUDIES. Quite a number thus far have been brought into the truth through the DRAMA SCENARIO.

EUREKA DRAMA SUCCESSFUL

The EUREKA DRAMA is being blessed of the Lord beyond our expectations. We feared that on account of the popularity of moving pictures, the EUREKA DRAMA would awaken interest only in country districts not supplied with moving picture theaters, etc. Experience is proving the contrary. It is demonstrated by experience that people will come to the EUREKA DRAMA and sit for two hours watching the DRAMA pictures and listening to the DRAMA lectures with rapt attention, altogether in preference to going to a picture show. Indeed, the class of people attending the moving picture theaters is not always the intelligent and those of lofty sentiments. This is manifest from the character of the plays chiefly patronized. The theater managers know the tastes of their audiences. Indeed, some of the good people whom we would interest are far from being regular attendants at picture theaters.

For a time we tried to interest theater managers in presenting the DRAMA. Then to meet their ideas, we consented to cut some of the entertainments in two. Finally the theater people wanted us to eliminate the lectures and slides almost entirely and merely to show their audiences the beautiful films. This has led us to the decision that the regular DRAMA can be hereafter shown only in its full, complete form. What films we still have must be saved for presentation to the sort of audiences that will appreciate the lectures and the slides as well.

Where theaters are unused on Sundays, and can be obtained by the classes at very moderate rates permitting the showing of the complete DRAMA in its four parts, the Society will be willing to co-operate by loaning the DRAMA free and literature free—the class bearing all the expenses of transportation of DRAMA and operators. The operator of the DRAMA must be one who has already had a training with the Society, in order to guarantee proper presentation, and so that the valuable films be not destroyed. Ordinary operators are not capable of handling our DRAMA. It requires at least three months' careful preparation for this.

But, returning to the EUREKA DRAMA: It is being presented everywhere, often in high schools and colleges. Both professors and students are charmed with the pictures and with our wonderful phonograph records and our free SCENARIOS. At the colleges they object to the slide advertising Pastor Russell's STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We do not object to the omission of this slide when it is not desired. We believe that all of the schools should be interested in the EUREKA DRAMA; but we would not think of showing it to any except the advanced grades, unless the children were accompanied by their seniors.

Classes not yet supplied with the EUREKA DRAMA can find the description and prices in our issue of October 15, page 316.

"LIKE AS A FATHER PITIETH"

The night is so dark, and the way seems so long,
As we sadly and wearily struggle along;
So often we stumble, so frequently fall,
And the fear oft assails, "Shall we fail, after all?"

Poor hearts! we forget that the Master above
Ever watcheth each step in his infinite love,
And like as a father doth pity, the Lord
Ever pities all those who do trust in his Word.

No tear ever falls, when the heart's wound is sore,
But the Lord's tender heart keenly suffered the more;
No cup his hand pours, which he fills to the brim,
But his own loving lips were pressed first to its rim.

No night can be darker than that which he knew,
And no waters be deeper than those he passed through.
Ah, then, when they cross seems too heavy to bear,
Oh, remember thy Lord doth know, pity and care!!

GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

PLAIN FOOD FOR CLEAR BRAINS

NOVEMBER 14.—DANIEL 1:1-21.

JEWISH CAPTIVES—THE BABYLONIAN COURT—THE KING'S DAINTIES—DANIEL AND HIS CHUMS—LOYALTY TO PRINCIPLE AND ITS ADVANTAGE—PRINCIPLES ARE ETERNAL—SELF-CONTROL BRINGS BLESSINGS.

"Watch ye; stand fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong."—1 Corinthians 16:13.

Today's Study is specially selected for the World's Temperance Sunday. How glad we are that the subject of temperance is making such grand headway throughout the world! We will not controvert the claim of some that they are strong enough to use intoxicating liquors wisely, without injury, and to their profit. This may be true of some; but all will agree that such are the minority—that the vast majority of humanity have not sufficient self-control to pursue such a course. With the majority, undoubtedly the safe course is to decide, once and forever, that they will never use intoxicating liquors as a beverage, unless medically prescribed as an absolute necessity.

When we consider the worries of life, the crime, the headaches and the heartaches directly traceable to alcohol, it seems amazing that the wiser and the better balanced of humanity should be unwilling to curtail their own liberties in the interest of their fellowmen in general. The temperance sentiment—the total abstinence sentiment—is growing everywhere, our own nation grandly leading. We must not, however, deceive ourselves into thinking that the world has turned from alcohol. Undoubtedly no radical, permanent results will be reached until Messiah's kingdom shall take the full control of earth's affairs. We may be sure that thereafter nothing shall be permitted to hurt or to injure in all God's holy kingdom.—Isaiah 11:9.

The good news that the Russians had abolished the use of vodka in their army and throughout the nation has been offset by later news that the people, giving up their usual intoxicant—vodka—have taken to private distilling, and as great intemperance as ever prevails. The report that the use of liquors in the armies of France and England has been abolished, and that in the home lands the temperance spirit is growing, is offset by the terrible news that in all the armies it has been found necessary to stimulate the soldiers with alcoholic beverages, just prior to ordering the men to make one of those terrible charges against entrenched foes in which sometimes a half and sometimes all of the chargers are wounded or killed. The nervous strain incidental to such a charge seems to require that sensible men shall to some extent befog their senses in order to participate willingly.

How terrible a thing is this war! How shocking it is that men should be half-drugged before being commanded to go

to their death! Alas; how absurd the claim that the kingdoms at war are kingdoms of Christ, and that the world in general is Christendom—Christ's kingdom! How glad we are to know now that the kingdom of God's dear Son is very different from these kingdoms, and that it is about to be inaugurated! And how necessary seems the Bible declaration that incident to the establishment of the kingdom of God under the whole heavens is the great time of trouble, which already is beginning, and which the Bible indicates will end with anarchy and the utter destruction of the present order of society! Thank God that a new order will speedily take its place—symbolically called the new heavens and the new earth, wherein will dwell righteousness, and wherein wars will cease to the ends of the earth!—Psalm 46; 2 Peter 3:13.

PLAIN FOOD—NOT KING'S DAINTIES

Those inclined to think of the people of three thousand years ago as merely monkey men may take a lesson from today's study. It not only shows great intelligence on the part of some of the youths taken prisoners from the land of Israel into the land of Babylon, but it also shows a breadth of wisdom in the Babylonian king. The fact that King Nebuchadnezzar selected young men from the captives to be especially trained in the Babylonian schools as the king's advisers and wise men shows us a breadth of thought that is equaled by very few of the monarchs of today. Would King George of Great Britain accept some young German captives and make special provision for them as counselors? Or would the Kaiser some young Britons and provide for them? Or would any of the other nations of the world today show as much breadth of mind as did Nebuchadnezzar 2,500 years ago?

Not only was this done, but young Jewish captives proving their qualifications were given every opportunity to use their talents for the benefit of the nation adopting them. Daniel became Prime Minister in Babylon; and others of the Jewish captives attained to the rank of presidents of different divisions of the Babylonian Empire. Surely this shows not only that in some of the Jews there was merit of a high order, but also that there was an ability to appreciate this and an absence of narrowness and jealousy hindering the best interests of the empire.

Today's Study introduces us to the time when four of these Hebrew captives had been selected and been placed in Nebuchadnezzar's special school. This provision for them included not only their training, but also liberal provision for their physical welfare. They got a portion of the king's meat; that is, they shared in the food prepared for the royal family and supposed to be necessary for the development of the highest intelligence and ability.

Daniel and his three chums met the situation wisely. Under the Lord's blessing Daniel's meekness, gentleness and general nobility of character, derived from his knowledge of the true God, the faithful training of godly parents, and the knowledge of the divine law and promises, commended him at once to the loving favor of the chief eunuch. Thus the way was prepared for the favorable consideration of the proposition that these four young Hebrews would prefer to have plain food rather than the dainties and wines provided from the king's table.

The prince of the eunuchs hestitated to grant their request, believing that it would show unfavorably in the personal appearance of the Hebrews; and that this would be a reflection upon him and call for inquiry, and bring upon him the king's displeasure, and perhaps punishment. In reply to this, Daniel and his associates requested that the matter be tried for ten days; and that if at the end of that time they seemed to be losing in flesh or otherwise inferior to the others, their request for a change of diet would be withdrawn; otherwise that they should be permitted to continue on the plain food.

Their request was that they be permitted to eat pulse. This, strictly speaking, seems to signify leguminous foods, such as beans, peas, etc.; but we surmise that the word is used in a general way to signify vegetables. The world is coming to recognize the fact that such leguminous foods as beans and peas contain the elements of nutrition generally sought for in flesh meats; and, more and more, flesh food is being discarded or limited and farinaceous and leguminous foods being substituted, and apparently in many cases to advantage in our day. We are not to think, however, that the Bible prohibits the use of flesh food. Christians are left to the exercise of their judgment and experience as respects what kind of food will best nourish their bodies and make them most useful in the Lord's service. That flesh meat is not to be despised nor considered sinful is abundantly proven by the fact that our Lord and the apostles ate meat—lamb, fish, etc.

LOYALTY TO GOD AND TO PRINCIPLE

There is a special reason why Daniel and his fellows desired to be excused from eating of the king's portion. It was customary at that time to offer meat before idols before partaking of it—as though wishing to have some special blessing upon the meat. While such a blessing would not really injure the meat—for an idol is nothing and could neither bless nor curse the meat—nevertheless, to eat such meat would more or less imply to the people that the young men were receiving blessings from the heathen gods, and that any wisdom or efficiency that they might have were thus derived. Doubtless this thought had much to do with the request for the change of the food.

Besides, although the Scriptures have not forbidden the use of alcoholic liquors, they do indicate special blessings upon those who abstain, as well as upon eunuchs. Daniel and his fellows were apparently fully consecrated to the Lord; and their being away from home in a heathen land, instead of relaxing their religious interest, seems to have deepened it. More than ever they realized their need of a true God and desired to be his true servants.

How the Lord greatly blessed these young Hebrews in their resolution to live upright, clean lives in the midst of the heathen is a part of this lesson. At the close of the ten days of trial the four young Hebrews were found to be advantaged by the difference of diet; and the record is that eventually, when the king began to inquire of them, he found them ten times more wise than the magicians and astrologers of his realm. Nebuchadnezzar's wisdom was manifested in his exalting of these young men to high positions in his realm. It paid the young Hebrews well for all their self-denials and their loyalty to God and to principle.

We believe that there is a general operation of divine law to the effect that whoever seeks to live conscientiously, cleanly, purely, honestly, will have compensations in his own heart, in his own life, whether he also reaches positions of honor amongst men or not. The ideal condition, of course, is that of the true Christian, who is not merely a church member—not merely an attendant at church services—but whose entire will has been given to the Lord. To such an one, as the Apostle explains, "old things have passed away, and all things are become new." —2 Corinthians 5:17.

Such go to the Bible to learn therein the will of the Lord concerning them, and then to the best of their ability live in harmony with that will. It regulates them as respects what they eat, what they drink, where they go, what they do, what they read, what companionship they cultivate, and as respects even their very thoughts. With this class everything is subjected to the divine will. Of all the people in the world these have the best ground for happiness and peace, having the promise not only of the life that now is, but also of glory, honor and immortality in the life to come as members of the glorified church, sharers in its great work of blessing humanity during the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom.

A GOVERNOR'S VIEW OF TEMPERANCE:

"There is no denying that intoxicating liquors are indulged in by many respectable people; or that they are associated, in some literature and in some society, with good fellowship and merry times; or that some persons can use them moderately without immediate apparent injury. But take my word for it, that the risk of their use is a terrible risk; that there can be just as good times and just as good fellowship without them; and that nobody thinks a bit the less of a young fellow because he will not use them; but, on the contrary, that every business man or professional man, whatever his own habits, instinctively turns away from employing any young man who has the taint of liquor about him.

"Every physician now condemns the use of alcohol as a drink. Every employer counts the use of it against an employee. If you want a clear head, if you want a sound heart, if you want a clean conscience, if you want a healthy body, if you want money in your pocket and credit to your name, put your foot right down and say that you are going to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors, and keep the faith. Is there anything nastier than a man under their influence? Be clean and wholesome. Keep your brain clear, your head steady, your self-respect firm, and you will have a life that is worth living. This is not a matter of goody talk and sentiment. If nothing else will convince you, experience will; but it will be that experience which can only come too late to be of any use. You may think that you have self-control enough to take care of yourself. But the chances are that your self-control will be no more than pasteboard against a Gatling gun if you tamper with temptation and once begin the indulgence of intoxicating liquors."

HOW RUSSELL SAGE COUNSELED

At a University Club meeting one of the members entertained his fellows with the following story:—

"My first years in New York were not successful ones. I came down from the upper part of the State, determined to get along; but somehow, after a brief experience of city life, I became discouraged and lax. There were no positions but clerkships to be gotten, and to work my way up to the top from an army of young clerks, all as efficient as myself, seemed hopeless. At twenty-five, I was making only four dollars a week more than when I started; and I hadn't a cent to my credit in the bank.

"One day, scared and desperate about my future, I called to see Russell Sage. Sage came from my part of the country, and had known my father well. He listened to my narrative with interest. 'Do you drink?' he said.

"'Yes, sir, moderately,' said I; 'but only very moderately.'

"'Well, stop it for a year. Then come to see me again,' said Mr. Sage.

"I stopped drinking for a year; and at the end I paid my second visit to the millionaire. He remembered all about me. He chatted a little while. Then he said, 'Do you gamble?'

"'Yes,' I said; 'I sometimes gamble.'

"'Well, give it up for a year; and then come to see me.'

"So I stopped gambling; and the year went by, and for the third time I appeared in Mr. Sage's office. 'Do you smoke?' he said, after we had had a third discussion of my affairs.

"'Yes, sir," said I.

"'Stop smoking,' said he. 'Come back after you have stopped smoking for a year.'

The speaker laughed. One of his auditors said impatiently: 'Well, when you went back what happened?'

"I never went back," was the reply, the speaker's eyes were twinkling humorously. "Because if I had, Mr. Sage would only have told me that now I had given up drinking, gambling and smoking, I must have saved enough money to start myself in business. It was true; I had saved enough money to start myself in business. That shrewd, wise man had set me, almost without my knowing it, on the road to success."

GOD'S PITY FOR THE HEATHEN

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of March 15, 1911, which please see.]

INTERESTING LETTERS

"AS UNORTHODOX AS THE SAVIOR HIMSELF"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

As I years ago had my name struck off the membership roll of Christ Church (Anglican), Chatham, Ontario, because I no longer believed its teachings and thought it not honest to be longer identified with that body, so, now, I desire my name to be enrolled as a joyful follower in the footsteps of Our Lord Jesus Christ—"in the Lamb's Book of Life."

From the time of severing my old connection up to a few months ago I was in darkness. I knew that in the Lord's good time and in his own good way all would be well with his world; but all of the alleged churches with their God-dishonoring and antagonistic doctrines repelled me. A well-known preacher at Macleod, Alta., sneeringly suggested that I would better start a church of my own so as to have one to suit me. I told him I did not think that would be necessary, but that if I ever found any body of Christians whose belief I could hold in my heart and soul, and not only with my lips, I would assuredly apply for membership in that body even though they were as "unorthodox" as the Savior himself. And here I am!

Since receiving a copy of THE WATCH TOWER with "Where Are the Dead," etc., in February last, I have read five and a half of your six books of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, then—with them at hand—I read the Bible through in a new and marvelously clearer light for which, after God, I thank you. Many of your Bible Students Monthlies also I have read—and, as you may imagine, very little else. Beyond the merest scanning of the daily paper, I have no time from my belated study of God's Word to devote to other reading.

In this world's goods I am a poor man, but I am richer with the glorious knowledge of God's Word that has come to me than I ever hoped to be rich. As I told an acquaintance recently, I would not if I could trade the knowledge of the Truth that I have received in the past few months for all the money in the world. And, as the dear man had recently buried his wife, I passed on to him "Where Are the Dead?"

My wife, I regret to say, is not a believer. I would not class her as an "unbeliever," but she is stronger for the so-called orthodox and accepted faith than for a personal faith based upon a personal searching of the Scriptures. The friction, however, will undoubtedly work out for the best. Her health is poor, and I spend every possible moment at home, but studying the Word of Truth.

Several of the brethren here I know, and though there is no doubt that my "godfathers and my godmothers" did their best for my infancy, according to their light, yet I propose to arrange to be baptized.

I trust that you will pardon the unseemly length of this letter, which has really grown far beyond my intention, beyond your time, but not, I hope, beyond your forbearance.

Your loving brother in the Lord,

ROBT. S. SMYTH.

"THE LIGHT THAT IS IN THEE"

Question.—Please explain the statement, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Answer.—Apparently our translators have failed to get the Master's thought; hence the bungling statement troubles the English reader. Manifestly it is absurd to say that a light in a person is darkness. If it is light it cannot be darkness; if it is darkness it cannot be light.

In Volume V., STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, we have endeavored to give the correct thought without taking time for discussion. On page 264 we render it thus: "If the light that is in thee become darkness [be extinguished], how great is that darkness." Evidently the darkness would be greater to the person who had once had the light and who had lost it than to the person who had never had it.

In Volume V., STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, page 294. we quote the passage, "If the light that is in thee is [become] darkness, how great is that darkness." The paraphrasing here is still different, but gives exactly the same thought, that light was once enjoyed and darkness displaced it.

A very good translation of the entire passage reads: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is unclouded your whole body will be lighted up; but if your eye is diseased your whole body will be dark. And if the inner light become darkness, how intense must that darkness be!"

Our Lord was showing the importance of a proper spiritual sight, in order to discern truth clearly. Originally man had a clear eye, mental as well as physical. By reason of sin his discernment of right and wrong has been more or less blurred, and some are totally blind to the deeper and spiritual things. As St. Paul says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all who believe not." (2 Corinthians 4:4) Again St. Paul prays for the church, "I pray God for you, ... that the eyes of your understanding opening, ye may be able to comprehend what is the hope of his calling," etc. (Ephesians 1:15-18) This is the same thought which our Lord sets forth. Whether the darkness is that which came by the fall of the natural man or whether it be a darkness which comes upon the Christian after having been once enlightened—either way—the darkness is the greater by reason of whatever light we once enjoyed.

The Bible uses the figure of the church as the body of Christ—its members His members. St. Paul suggests that the eye, ear, tongue, etc., which belong to the head, are special gifts for the church. Thus the Lord has set in the body the various members. He mentions the eye as one of these. A lesson is suggested in connection with the Lord's Word that in proportion as the Lord's people at any time have clearness of understanding of the divine truth it would be because the eye members would be blessed of the Lord with clearness of vision and opportunity to assist the entire body.

WHAT IS ADAM'S CONDITION?

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

It is over twenty-three years since the Lord opened my eyes to see the beauties of the great plan of salvation, and each year of that period has surpassed the preceding one in the preciousness of the truth of God.

During that time every experience has emphasized the fact that our understanding of the divine purpose is irrefutably correct, and I write to tell you of a little conversation between one of the Brethren and a gentlemen who takes a leading part in Sunday School work in his neighborhood,

which well illustrates the confusion of those who follow the creeds of men instead of the Word of God.

They were discussing the state of the dead, the denominationalist arguing that at the moment of death everyone went either to a heaven of bliss or to a hell or torment, while our Brother insisted that the Bible taught the dead were dead until time for the awakening at the second coming of Christ.

Brother W. said, "Now there was Adam, where do you suppose he went at the time of his death?"

Mr. A. replied, "Adam did not do anything very heinous, and even after he was driven out of the Garden of Eden he seemed to long for fellowship with God; so I presume he went to heaven when he died."

The Brother said, "But look here, Adam was the one who got all the rest of us in trouble by his disobedience. As St. Paul says, 'By the disobedience of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation,' and according to your view this means that Adam's sin was the thing which started millions of the race on the road which will terminate in an eternity of torture; and yet Adam, the one who helped to send them there, is to go to heaven."

Mr. A said, "That is so, isn't it? I never thought of that before. Surely Adam could not go to heaven after that. My statement was incorrect; Adam must have gone to hell when he died."

Brother W. said, "But see what that involves you in. Adam merely ate some forbidden fruit, and all have done as bad things as that. So if God sentenced Adam to such an awful eternity for such a little thing, what hope can the rest of us have?"

The gentleman answered this with, "That's so, that's so. My first answer was right, Adam surely went to heaven."

Our Brother replied, "If that is true then it involves you in a greater absurdity than before. Had Adam been obedient he would have dwelt forever in that perfect Paradise, the Garden of Eden, but now he had disobeyed and must die, and in consequence of his sin he was to get something far better than he ever would have had by obedience."

Our friend in his confusion tried to correct himself again saying, "That couldn't be; that would be inconsistent; Adam must have gone to hell—that's the correct thought."

Again our Brother had his turn: "But see what this leads to. Thousands of years ago Adam sinned and died, while today men are passing into death who have had far more of the spirit of rebellion in their hearts than Adam ever had; and yet they will have thousands of years less of infernal agony than Adam, who committed such a little sin in comparison. Would that be justice?"

Mr. A. said, "You've got me all confused. I do not know where I'm at, and I don't know where Adam's at either."

How well this brings home to our hearts the fact that while the Truth is "clear as crystal," the error is "clear as mud"! I do not like to use an undignified expression like the last, but it takes an undignified statement to describe an undignified system of doctrine. Thanks be to the Lord who has lifted our feet out of the mud and placed them upon the Rock!

With many prayers that the heavenly Father will continue to use you to His glory to the very end of your course, I remain,

In much Christian love,

B. H. BARTON.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE SIN OF THE CHURCH

BY RT. REV. CHARLES D. WILLIAMS

(Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Michigan)

It is an appalling thought that the church should have had a part in the crime of Calvary, and yet it did, and that the chief part. It is really the villain in the plot.

What was the sin of the church that crucified Christ? Or, to put it another way, what are the characteristics of a perverted religion? They are chiefly two:

1. The ecclesiastical mind.
2. The ecclesiastical conscience.

The ecclesiastical mind is a closed mind—and there is nothing it resents so much as being pried open to receive a new idea. Its settled rule of judgment, its accepted test of truth is "What is new is never true and what is true is never new." Philip Gilbert Hamerton has aptly compared the conventional process of religious instruction and training to the process of etching on glass. The mind of the pupil is first covered with an impervious coat of pious prejudice. The pattern of the desired creed is then carefully traced with the stylus of authority; and then only is the mind exposed to the sand-blast of reality and the acid test of experience, which cut along the exposed lines only and the desired creed is indelibly engraved upon the mind.

The other characteristic of a perverted religion is the ecclesiastical conscience. It is strikingly illustrated by one Good Friday scene. A procession is sweeping through the streets of Jerusalem, bound for the Governor's Palace. Who compose this procession? They are the religious leaders of the people, the prominent divines, the chief ecclesiastics, the dignitaries and prelates of the Church, and the Sanhedrin, the chief religious legislative body of the nation. It is as if you rolled into one the Presbyterian General Assembly, the Methodist General Conference, the Episcopal General Convention, the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, and the House of Lords, with the whole Bench of Bishops.

What is the business they have in mind? They are intent on committing the greatest crime in history—a crime at which the whole world has shuddered ever since. They would crucify the Son of God. But at Pilate's threshold they stop. Why? Ah, they have stumbled across a statute with a penalty, a canon of the church with a sanction. And these people have great respect for penalties and sanctions, if they have little for truth and righteousness. If they should enter a heathen house that Passover morning, they would become ceremonially defiled and unfit to partake of the sacrament. They would lose their reputation for strict churchmanship. They are indefinitely scrupulous and utterly unprincipled, entirely sincere and yet completely untruthful and unrighteous, pious and perverted.

The "ecclesiastical conscience" holds the precept so near the eye that it hides the principle; it substitutes petty thumbnail rules for the fundamental law of righteousness. It makes religiousness a substitute for righteousness instead of a means thereto. It puts technical priests and properties in the place of character. It makes churchmanship do for religion and "churchianity" for "Christianity."

And the ecclesiastical conscience is not confined to the church. The lawyer who makes a legality his test instead of justice; the merchant who is satisfied simply to conform to the code of his trade, whose excuse for any dishonesty is, "They all do it"; the "gentleman" or "lady" who puts good form and manners in the place of sincerity and kindliness of heart, and politeness in the place of courtesy—all are alike animated by the ecclesiastical conscience.

It was this ecclesiastical mind and this ecclesiastical conscience which crucified Jesus Christ.

MARCHING TO UNIVERSAL SLAUGHTER-HOUSE

Again we quote for the benefit of our readers, truthful words from an editorial of the *New York American* as follows:

"We are living today in a time more trying to the souls of men than any period in the world's history. We are witnessing, in the war which involves every continent of the earth in the direct conflict of arms, a visitation of horror and destruction greater than the human race has ever suffered before. From North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australasia, from every corner of the earth and every clime, human beings are marching to the universal slaughter-house.

"In one year of this fearful struggle billions of property have been destroyed, and the bloody combatants already claim to have murdered or maimed more than four million human beings. This is all in one year, and no decision is yet in sight. Neither side has yet won a decisive advantage.

"The military experts believe that the war has only just begun. Lord Kitchener, head of the British forces, declared, even before the Russian defeats, that it would take three years to reduce the Teutonic allies and the Turks, while the disinterested military experts are doubtful if the Central Empires can ever be conquered.

"The French, the British, the Russians and the Italians are waiting until their factories, and our own American factories, can equip their armies with guns and ammunition which they need in order to bring to bear their greatest power for destruction. If four million men have gone in one year in which the side that it stronger in numbers has not yet brought its full strength to bear, what will be the wastage in human life if they fight it out to a finish?

"We Americans are neutral. But are we not interested?

Are we not involved in this fearful struggle? Are we not involved in it as a part of the human family, as members of the white race, as participants in the Western civilization, all of which are threatened by a prolongation of this dreadful carnage?

"If this war is fought out to a finish, shall we not suffer morally and materially, whichever side wins? If the allies are the conquerors and the German people are overwhelmingly beaten and broken, shall we not, as part of the world, suffer an irretrievable loss? Germany's wonderful contributions to the world of science and industry and commerce are known to all business men. But, great as they are, her contributions to governmental efficiency, to the ability of society acting as a social unit to perform wonders for the benefit of her people beyond even the dreams of individuals, have scarcely yet been recognized. She is making a contribution to socialistic experiments greater than was ever known to any people before. Her national Government owns its railroads, its telephone and telegraph companies. Her great cities own their waterworks, their gas and electric light companies and their street railways. They build wharves and docks and they plant forests and they develop land, not by individual initiative, but as a governmental function. They, first among the nations, began to free their workingmen from industrial slavery by old age pensions, workingmen's compensation laws and rigid safety appliance laws and inspections. They first devised the means of freeing the farmers from financial peonage by rural credits through which the farmer could borrow money from the State to improve his farm. They are showing the world what the people in their organized capacity can do and how prosperous they can make themselves, even though crowded within the confines of a not too favorable territory. We Americans are every day copying something from the German socialistic experiments. Can we see them crushed without immeasurable loss to ourselves?

"If, on the other hand, the Allies should be crushed, it would involve the destruction of France and of a historically great people whose contribution to human liberty and to the economic freedom of the world John Stuart Mill, the distinguished political economist, has declared greater than that of any other, even including our own.

"Would it benefit the world to see the spirit of England broken and her commercial and industrial efficiency impaired and her purchasing power destroyed? There never was a time in the last twenty-five years when, if England could no longer buy from us, we would not have faced a financial crisis. We do not forget the great enterprises and the great industrial developments in America which English capital has financed. We cannot forget that most of the elementary principles of liberty which we call our own had their birth and first development in Great Britain."

* * *

When, after reading the above editorial, we call to mind that the Lord in the Bible has foretold the direct things foreboded in the editorial, and much more—even to anarchy and the entire destruction of the present order of things—we might well weep. God has kindly veiled the eyes of humanity that they do not see the coming storm in all its dread severity; because they have no eyes of faith to see the resulting blessings as we see them.

How glad we are to know that ours is a God of love—to know that the millions that are dying in frenzied strife are not going to eternal torture, but in due time they shall share in the general blessings of the world which Messiah's kingdom will accomplish. Can we wonder then that our Master left the message, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass; then lift up your heads and rejoice; knowing that your deliverance draweth nigh"?—Luke 21:28.

If the deliverance of the church meant eternal suffering to the non-elect, how could we rejoice in it? But as our eyes of understanding are opening, we see with astonished wonder the lengths and the breadths, the heights and the depths of the great Creator's love and mercy. We perceive that the glorification of the church means the blessing of all then alive by the inauguration of the reign of righteousness and peace, and by the breaking of the shackles of sin and ignorance, and by the binding of Satan for a thousand years. And oh, so much more, the release of the thousands of millions of heathens who, for the past six thousand years, have been going down into the great prison-house of death—the Bible hell—the tomb! With this rosy view of the future, which the Bible so surely gives, darkness and clouds, sorrows and tears for the immediate present cannot daunt us. Our souls do magnify the Lord! We sing daily, hourly, the new song, "True and righteous are thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty! Who shall not come and worship before thee, when all thy righteous dealings shall be made manifest?"—Revelation 15:3, 4; 16:7.

THE SECRET PLACE

Wondrous the thought—that the Father
Knows of our every care;
Feels for us when the shadow
Lurks where the sky was fair:
Knows of the pent-up sorrow,
Feels for the eyes that weep;
Tells of a brighter morrow
Where shadows never creep!
Precious to know the Good Shepherd
Tenderly guides his sheep
Over the stony places;
Cares when the path is steep:
Watches for greenest pastures,
Tends them with loving skill;
Guards them from fright and danger,
Leads them by waters still!
Joyous the thought—that the angels,
Guardians are, to keep;
Bearing in hands so tender
Weary and wounded feet:
Daily are gaining access
To the dear Father's face;
Hourly are seeking succor
For those who crave his grace!
Blessed to feel we are dwelling
Safe in the secret place;
Under Jehovah's shadow,
Trusting till we can trace:
Knowing no ill can harm us,
Knowing his arm of love
Safely will shield, till he calls us
Unto his home above!

—MARY CLEVELAND JEWELL.

WHY GOD HAS PERMITTED SATAN'S LYING DECEPTIONS

"The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."
—Deuteronomy 13:3.

God's children realize that this text is to them full of deep significance and import. It can scarcely be considered too often or be too strongly emphasized. The word prove has the sense of test, demonstrate. The words were addressed to Israel, God's chosen people who had entered into a special covenant with him, agreeing to be his people, set apart from the heathen nations by whom they were surrounded, to be a holy nation, Jehovah's peculiar treasure; and he had agreed to be their God. As they had promised to obey all God's requirements, so it was proper that the Lord should prove them. He did not prove the heathen nations; for they had made no covenant with him and were not in relationship to him as his servants. But Israel must be proved. The character of their testing is shown in the context. This proving would be accomplished by permitting false teachers, false prophets, to be amongst them.

We are to remember that the word prophet, in its broadest signification, means one who teaches, as well as one who foretells. The Lord permitted some to be among the Israelites who would declare things designed to mislead them into the worship of other gods. This would not be because God could not have stricken down the false teachers, but it was permitted as a test to the people who professed to be consecrated to the service of the true God, Jehovah. These false prophets were able to give signs or demonstrations to convince of their miraculous power. But Israel was warned of God to give heed to no prophet whose teachings and works would tend to lead them away from Jehovah and his service. Such signs and wonders are still frequent accompaniments of the heathen religions, which are inspired by Satan and his demon hosts.

Since all that happened to fleshly Israel was for our ad-

monition (1 Corinthians 10:11), our text has a very forceful application to spiritual Israel. "The prince of demons" and his hosts of fallen spirits have great wonder-working powers, as well as considerable ability to foretell future events, sometimes with marvelous accuracy. The fallen angels possess such knowledge of earthly affairs, with power to read the mind as well. This has been true throughout the past.

One of the tests that spirit-mediums formerly used was to tell of the death of some one before it had become known. They would tell, for instance, of the death of some notable. They might declare, "The king of Sweden died today." There would be no means of verifying this information until some ship would come over; for in those days, before the invention of the telegraph and cable, news traveled very slowly. But in a month or two the news would come, and it would prove to be true as foretold by the medium. It would sometimes be found that he had died at the very hour that the medium had declared. Mediums can do less along this line today because of modern inventions for the rapid transmission of news throughout the world; but they have many other means of ascertaining facts and communicating them.

GOD'S WORD HIS PEOPLE'S GUIDE

We are not informed regarding the power used by the fallen angels in their miracle working and cures, but we know that it is not from God. It is for the Lord's children to remember that he has given us his Word, and that he reveals himself through this Word. It is sufficient that he warns us against having anything to do with these occult powers. Examples of such warnings are found in the following Scriptures: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 2 Kings 17:17; 23:24; 1 Chronicles 10:13,; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19; Jeremiah 27:9, 10; 29:8, 9; Luke 8:26-35; Acts 16:16-18.

We are to search the Scriptures and thus to learn about God and his great plan, and we are not to permit any of these false prophets to lead us away from him or to have any influence over us. The Lord permits this evil influence to be in the world. Why? Because he is now selecting the bride for his Son, and he wishes the members of this class to be tested. Only by permitting false teachers could he demonstrate to himself and to the angels to what extent his professed people are loyal to him, and whether they will follow false doctrines and false teachers. The Lord will have only those to be of the very elect who will obey him and will trust him even where they cannot trace him; so long as they have his Word, his testimony, it should be sufficient.

The tendency of all these false teachers is to lead away from the one true God to the worship of demons. There are a great many gods, even in America. When a Brahmin comes to this country to live, he just as truly worships Brahma here as in India. Theosophists also make their images or idols to take the place of the true God. Because of the greater civilization the false gods are not always of clay or bronze or wood. But today the idol images are often made with printer's ink. The gods that the heathen of civilized countries worship are very different from the God of the Bible.

There are very many today in civilized countries who do not worship the true God. Some have an abstract idea of a principle of right, and this principle is their god. They have also an idea of a principle of evil or wrong, and this evil principle is to them the devil, and is the only devil they recognize. These people are seeking to do right, but they are deluded.

There are more and more of these false gods coming up in these days. There is the New Thought god. We believe that these new, unscriptural theories and ideas are from the demons, who are gaining greater power to deceive at this time. We do not know that the false teachings of the past were recognized as false by those teaching them—their promoters were probably not aware that they were false teachers. And so it is today. The teachers of false doctrines, the leaders of all these cults, ancient and modern, which deny or make void the Scriptures, are deceived. The evil spirits are responsible for much of the confusion and difficulty in which the world is today.

The Apostle Paul, in referring to the close of this Gospel age, declares that false doctrines will be multiplied. He tells us why many will be misled and deceived. He says, "They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie [Genesis 3:4]: that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12) The intimation here seems to be that those who have come into touch with God and with his truth will be so attracted by the truth that it will be like the needle attracted to the pole. God is the great pole. Those really drawn to him will be difficult to swerve. Although a magnetic needle may be temporarily diverted from the pole, yet it will surely swing back and point in the right direction. And so it is with God's true people. They have an affinity for the truth, they are influenced by it, magnetized by it, drawn.

These received the truth in the love of it—not in the love of building up a denomination, not in the love of soliciting money for a denomination, not in the love of certain ideas of their own, but in the love of the truth itself. The Lord will not permit those who receive the truth in the love of it to be turned aside. But he will send strong delusions to those who receive it from any other motive or for any other reason. These strong delusions he will permit to be spread abroad because he purposes to demonstrate the real heart attitude of each of those who have named his name and taken his vows upon them. Thus the loyal-hearted ones will be made manifest, and of them he declares, "They shall be mine, . . . in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. 3:17.

FALLEN SPIRITS ESPECIALLY ACTIVE TODAY

The fallen spirits have been successful throughout the entire world in deluding and ensnaring humanity. The Lord advises his people that these spirits will be especially active and especially seductive in their methods of attack in the harvest of this present age. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faitn, [through] giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy." (1 Timothy 4: 1, 2) We are forewarned that this "hypocrisy" on the part of the seducing spirits consists of personating "angels of light" (2 Corinthians 11:13, 14), and pretending to bring in "new light."

Amongst barbarians there is no reason why the spirits should try to bring new light; for these are asleep and already under the power of delusion and false doctrines. But amongst the enlightened and civilized, thought and investigation are being aroused in this the beginning of the great day of the Lord. Despite the blinding influence of Satan and the hosts of fallen spirits many of these are awakening, and it is here that Satan is kept busy.

Amongst mankind today the old time necromancy and incantations will not do; their intellects are too alert to be much or long hoodwinked by these things. Even the deceptions of Spiritism in its manifestations of superhuman powers through tipping, writing, spirit-photography, voices, etc., all for the purpose of proving human immortality and the ability of the dead to commune with those on earth, are too gross and foolish to deceive and captivate a large proportion of intelligent people, and especially God's consecrated ones, the very class Satan is most anxious to stumble. Consequently there are changes in progress—new "garments of light" are assumed continually; and every feature of present truth sent by God as "meat in due season" for his saints is promptly counterfeited to "deceive if possible the very elect."

But it is not possible to deceive and lead away those whose faith in God, through Christ, is fixed, who are trusting in the merit of Christ's great redeeming sacrifice, and whose hearts are wholly consecrated to the Lord and his service. Such shall "never fall"; but all others are to be separated from the faithful. God so uses Satan's wrath in the outworking of his plans that he may be said to send the strong delusions which are now misleading all whose faith is not securely founded on the Rock Christ Jesus, who have not put on the "whole armor of God," supplied in his Word. Those who are attracted by error, and take pleasure in it are thus being manifested, and their condemnation as unfit for a share in the heavenly kingdom will be demonstrated as just and holy and righteous altogether.

DELUSIONS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY

Among the popular and more refined devices of the great adversary, and all the powers of darkness, are Christian Science and Theosophy. These on the outside, together with the evolutionary and anti-Biblical theories, on the inside, called Higher Criticism, advanced thought, etc., are rapidly tearing to shreds all of truth that the poor nominal systems ever had. These theories all bear the distinctive marks of the "father of lies." (John 8:44) They all with one consent declare man to be immortal. Higher Critics regard as "old wives' fables" much of the Word of God, including the record of miracles, the story of Adam and Eve and their fall in Eden, the story of Jonah and the great fish, etc.

The name "Christian Science" is a misnomer for the tenets of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. Her teachings are devoid of scientific elements, and the word "Christian" attached as part of the name given her theories is only calculated by Satan to deceive and destroy God's people. To Christian Scientists Christ

is not a Savior, nor was a savior needed. Christ was only a good man, a Christian Scientist, who but imperfectly understood the new science which he introduced, but which in these latter times has been perfectly and fully set forth by the late Mrs. Eddy, of Boston. It has for its trademark, so to speak, "All is life; there is no death!" Thus they declare Satan's old falsehood started in Eden, "Ye shall not surely die." Jesus declared that Satan "was a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth," not from his own beginning, but from man's beginning.

The various shades of Universalism unite in the same conclusion—Christ did not die to ransom man from the power of the grave, as the Scriptures declare. He was only a man like other men, a good and wise Teacher, but not a Savior in any substitutionary sense, they assert. Some hold that man evolved from an ape or a tadpole or from protoplasm; that he was a very bad likeness and not at all an image of God; that he was like a "half-baked cake." But all unite in the belief that mankind are being gradually evolved to perfection. All assure us in Satan's very language, "Ye shall not surely die!"—death is only a process of evolution; man is his own savior.

Then we have Theosophy—a theory appealing to a goodly number of the cultured and aesthetic who are of the blind, naked and hungry in the nominal churches (Rev. 3:17). It comes forward as one of the newest and most polished forms of religious thought. But those versed in ancient history know that in its very essence it is a revival of the central thought of Hindooism, and in many particulars of the delusions of the so-called "German Mystics" of medieval times. Theosophy holds that "all things are of God" in the absolute and ridiculous sense. It holds that all finite existences were effluxed or thrown off from one Infinite Being; that these effluxed beings—angels, men, beasts, birds and devils—being portions of Deity, are immortal, and (as Satan has always taught) "shall not surely die."

In harmony with the philosophy of Socrates and Plato (while denying these as the authors or even the burnishers of their doctrine, and claiming that these Greek philosophers got their information, as they now get it, direct from God by communion and intuition), Theosophy claims not only that man will live forever future, but that he has lived forever past. It appeals to the weak-minded with the question, "Have you never seen places that seemed strangely familiar the first time you visited them? Those were places you had seen before your present existence began." And, as of old, Satan may sometimes assist a sluggish imagination with a dream. Theosophy holds that death is not death, but a new birth; and that each individual will be reborn again and again until he has developed sufficiently the divine nature; and that then he will be reabsorbed into God for eternity.

MAN'S WISDOM IS FOOLISHNESS WITH GOD

Theosophy professes to be based upon neither theology nor philosophy. The word Theosophy is defined by its advocates to mean the Religion of Wisdom. They claim that its wisdom is divine, resulting from direct intuition and communion with God. Consequently they reject philosophical reasoning, and revelation such as the Scriptures, as hindrances to true wisdom. They have substituted for the Revelation of God the vain imaginings of their own imperfect minds—holy meditations. "Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools," was written by divine authority of a similar class.—Romans 1:21, 22.

Theosophy rejects all revealed religion, ignores all doctrines and claims to be the religion of cause and effect—that sooner or later wrong-doing will react upon the wrong-doer, bringing its penalty; and right-doing will bring its reward. It places Christ and Moses on a parity with Socrates, Plato, Confucius and Mohammed as world-teachers. It is ready to quote from the Bible or from the Koran any fragment that can be turned to account in its own support, but does not regard any book or man as especially inspired authority. It professes to be the patron of every noble trait and every benevolent design, and is willing to class as Theosophists all popular people. It favors alms-giving and good deeds, so done as to be seen of men.

Therefore Theosophy is, as it claims to be, preeminently suited to the sentiments of the majority of the wise children of this world, who do not appreciate either their own imperfections or God's mercy in Christ. They say "I want no one to pay my debts for me. I expect to pay for myself the penalty of my sins—if I commit any." All holding such sentiments are ripe for Theosophy. Indeed, the entire "Christian world" is ready to leave its former confused creed-mooring, and to set sail, with Theosophy for pilot and good works for motive power, to reach a haven of rest and happiness—if there be such a haven; for many of them doubt it. Alas! how ignorance of God's Word and plan and how the confusion of the nominal churches have paved the way for this great falling away from the cross of Christ to "another gospel," which is really no Gospel.—Galatians 1:6-9.

Of course none of these delusions has any use for the doctrine of the cross of Christ—the "ransom for all"—or its testimony "in due time," now or hereafter. See 1 Timothy 2:4-6. The Apostle here declares that God our Savior "will have all men to be saved [from the Adamic death now holding sway over the whole world], and to come to the knowledge of the truth; for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." But no, the Bible doctrine of a Ransom past and of a consequent restitution in the future (Acts 3:19-23) finds no place in any of these theories.

SATAN'S LIE THE BASIS OF FALSE DOCTRINES

These foretold "strong delusions" of our day are none of them actually strong or powerful. On the contrary, they are very weak. But they have great power to delude many because a large proportion of professed Christians of our day have never become real disciples of Christ, but are merely "tares," imitation Christians. Among those who are real Christians, few are "weaned from the milk." (Isaiah 28:9; Hebrews 5:12-14) Few Christians in the nominal church are mentally or spiritually out of their swaddling clothes. Few have even used the milk of God's Word, and grown thereby to the use and appreciation of the "strong meat" of present truth, which is for the developed man in Christ. It is not surprising, therefore, that those whom Spiritism and Swedenborgianism did not affect are now being gathered into Christian Science and Theosophy, the later developments of Satan's cunning and deception.

The strength of these delusions lies in the grave errors mixed with truths long held by Christian people, because of the "falling away" from the pure faith of the apostlic church, foretold in the Scriptures. Among these errors none is designed to open the heart and mind to these delusive and destructive theories of today more effectually than the general belief of the first lie—"Ye shall not surely die." The general acceptance of this lie results from a failure to understand the Bible doctrine concerning life and immortality, which were brought to light by our Lord Jesus through his Gospel of salvation from sin by his ransom-sacrifice.

Every error held obscures and hinders some truth; and we have now come to the time when every child of God needs all the panoply of truth—the armor of God. He who has not on the "whole armor of God" is sure to fall into error in this "evil day," this "hour of temptation, which has come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell on the earth." And "judgment must begin at the house of God." Who shall be able to stand? None except those who are "building themselves up in the most holy faith" with the precious promises and vital doctrines of the Word of God.

ALL BUT "VERY ELECT" TO BE DECEIVED

The advocates of these false doctrines are surprisingly alert and active everywhere, especially in the United States, where thought is most active and where liberty often means license. Hundreds of thousands have embraced these errors as new and advanced light. The extent of their success is not fully apparent to many; for their success lies in a still hunt for prey. Their advocates are to be found in almost every congregation of every denomination, and especially among the more cultured; and the "angel of light" feature is seldom neglected. The nominal churches are already permeated, leavened with these false doctrines.

The Scriptural prophecy that "a thousand shall fall at thy [the true church's] side, and ten thousand at thy right hand" (Psalm 91:3-14), is now fulfilled before our eyes. The doctrine of the ransom, the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world, has been the test. "The cross" has been the great stumbling stone now, as in the days of our Redeemer's first advent. Nearly all have fallen away from faith in this vital and fundamental doctrine of Christianity, of the Bible. By the great majority Jesus is now considered as only an example for us to follow in certain particulars, not as our Redeemer not as our ransom.

From the teachings of Scripture we may expect that all but the "very elect" of God will be more or less stumbled by the errors and worldliness of our day. (Matthew 24:24-27; 2 Peter 2:3-11) The "angel of light" sophistries of the powers of evil, and their works of healing, will surely delude all whose eyes of understanding are not open through heeding the testimony of the sure Word of God.

The doing of many wonderful works is one of the old tricks of Satan and his evil hosts. If disease and death are to a considerable extent under Satan's control during

the reign of evil (Hebrews 2:14), why might he not, in his present emergency, when his fall is so near, reverse his methods of working and do some works of healing, thereby to clinch his errors and deceptions and to re-bind some whose eyes have been gradually opening under the light of the dawning Millennial day, the day of Christ?

We believe that he is adopting this policy, and that he will do so yet more. We believe that our Lord's pertinent inquiry was suggestive of this when he said, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?" And, "If Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end." (Matthew 12:26; Mark 3:26) So now, as Satan's kingdom is about to be overthrown, it is his effort to support it by many wonderful works, done by his unknowing as well as by his wilful agents, falsely and in the name of Christ.

THE FAITHFUL SOON TO SHINE FORTH

These various errors, "doctrines of demons," are gathering out of God's kingdom "all that offend, and them which do iniquity" (and these constitute the great mass); while the faithful, who are to receive the kingdom and be joint-heirs with Christ in his great Messianic reign now about to be inaugurated, alone will stand. (Eph. 6:11-13) When this separation is complete—and we believe it is now almost accomplished—the fire of the great time of trouble will make general havoc of present arrangements—social, financial, political, ecclesiastical. Then all errors and falsehoods in religion will go down forever. Then the Lord's faithful little flock, having received immortality and divine nature, "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," seated with Christ in his throne. (Revelation 3:21) For a thousand years they shall reign over the world, for the scattering of all ignorance and blindness and the uplifting of all the families of the earth, the living and the dead.

Then let all who know the truth as set forth in the sure Word of the Lord be active in its spread. The time is short! If you cannot preach orally in public, perhaps you can preach privately to your neighbors and friends and those with whom you come in contact. Surely nearly all can preach by the printed page and by pen, as well as by consistent daily conduct. Those about us need whatever help we can give them; and if they do not get it very soon they will surely become entangled in some of these latter-day delusions of the adversary.

THE MINISTRY OF SORROW

"Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord!" "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"—Psalm 130:1; Job 34:29.

The life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its heights of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up a large part of the warp and the woof of experience; and the web of character which flows from the active loom of life, will be fine and beautiful or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, in the present reign of sin and evil the somber shades predominate; and to such an extent is this true that the Word of God aptly describes the human family in their present condition as a groaning creation. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now," says the Apostle. The children of God are no exception to this universal rule; we also "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the deliverance of our body"—our company, the body of Christ.—Romans 8:22, 23.

But while we are waiting for our deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive them should be a matter of deepest concern; for according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or its adversity and trial bear to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increases or friends multiply or a large measure of earthly joy comes to us, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in the things of earth! But when the keen edge of sorrow or disappointment is felt, when riches or health fail, when friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural tendency is to despondency and despair.

Just here is a very important part of the great warfare of the Christian's life. He must fight the tendencies of his old nature and must confidently claim and expect the victory, in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not yield to the alluring influences of favorable outward conditions, neither must he sink beneath the weight of trials and adversity. He must not permit any experience in life, however hard and painful, to sour and harden him or make him bitter, morose or unloving. Nor may he allow pride or love of show, or self-righteousness, to feed upon the temporal blessings which the Lord in his loving providence has given him to prove his faithfulness as a steward.

DEPTHS OF SORROW LEAD TO HEIGHTS OF JOY

Sorrow and griefs may, and perhaps often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord will be our stay and strength in every experience which he permits. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the joy and preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow and grief, when we draw near to the Lord, that he draws especially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when in his deep affliction he cried to God, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!" (Vs. 1, 2) Feeling his own weaknesses and shortcomings, longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying of the bountiful provisions of the divine plan of salvation through Christ, he adds, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities [imputing them to us] O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared [reverenced]".—Vs. 3, 4.

How precious are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities, of its utter inability to fully measure up to the perfect law of righteousness! How blessed it is to know that when our hearts are loyal and true, our God does not mark against us the unavoidable blemishes of our earthen vessel! If we come daily to him for cleansing, through the merits of our Redeemer, our failures are not imputed to us, but freely forgiven and washed away. The perfect righteousness of our Savior is our glorious dress, arrayed in which we may come to God with humble boldness, courage—even into the presence of the great Jehovah, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If thus God ignores the infirmities of our flesh, and fully receives us and communes with us as his dear children, we should so regard one another, considering not and charging not against one another the infirmities of the flesh, which each humbly confesses, and which they, like us, are earnestly endeavoring to overcome by the grace of God, to the best of their ability. To each one of the Lord's true children the words of the Apostle apply: "If God be for us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Shall that God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Shall Christ that died?" (Romans 8:31, 33, 34—Diaglott) The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are cultivated, indulged in without proper effort to correct them, and are justified, in order that the faults may be continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," and take decisive measures to correct them, the Lord will himself judge and chasten us.—1 Cor. 11:31, 32.

In the midst of the cares, perplexities and difficulties that come to the children of the Lord, we are to trust him fully, and to possess our souls in peace and patience! We are to wait patiently in his own good way. How necessary is the patient waiting on the Lord! The Psalmist says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5, 6) In every experience of sorrow and distress, and when the strain of the jarring discords and the stinging vexations and wounds that make the heart bleed, threaten to overwhelm the spirit, let the child of God remember that "he knows, and loves, and cares," and that his ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be too severe. The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah, no! If by his grace the experiences may not work for our good, they will be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering.

THE REWARD OF PATIENT WAITING

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." (Psalm 37:5-7) We must not be disappointed and allow our faith to falter when

the test of patient endurance is applied, while the outward peace and quietness which we crave tarry long. Our Father has not forgotten us when the answer to our prayers seems to be delayed. Outward peace and calm are not always the conditions best suited to our needs as new creatures; and we would not desire conditions in which the precious fruits of the Spirit would not grow and develop in us. Therefore, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice." (1 Peter 4:12, 13) He who numbers the very hairs of our heads is never indifferent to the sufferings and needs of his weakest and humblest child. Oh, how sweet is the realization of such loving, abiding care! "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

The saints have indeed in every sorrow and grief a blessed consolation of which the world is wholly in ignorance. None but the child of God can know it. What is this consolation? Oh, you who have never enlisted under the banner of the Cross, who have never put yourselves wholly into the hands of the Lord to be moulded and fashioned into his glorious likeness, who have never made an earnest effort to stem the tide of the tendencies of your own fallen nature, who have never contended earnestly for truth and righteousness in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, what can you know of the sweets of this divine consolation? It is the precious balm of Gilead for wounded spirits on the battle-field of life, it is the stimulating, refreshing draught for fainting souls, hard pressed by the relentless foe. It is the soothing caress of a loving hand upon the fevered brow of the noble contender for truth and godliness. It is the gentle whisper of hope and love and courage when heart and flesh are almost failing. This is divine consolation, the only consolation that has in it any virtue of healing or refreshment. It is reserved alone for those noble souls who are faithfully bearing the burden and heat of the day in the service of the King of kings; while those who listlessly drift with the current of the world and the downward tendencies of the carnal nature can never have an intimation of its sweetness.

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and to do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, when we realize our own helplessness and incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. It is then that we may realize that his strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do his will; for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." Then let us more and more lay hold of this strength of the Lord, that we may courageously pursue our course in the narrow way of difficulty and trial. Precious indeed to the saint of God is the ministry of pain and sorrow!

"YE HAVE SEEN THE PATIENCE OF JOB"

The saints of every age have learned the blessing of afflictions and sorrows. The Psalmist David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes"; and again, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy Word." (Psalm 119:67, 71) God's faithful servant Job suffered almost overwhelming troubles, but the Lord brought him out into a large place when his testings had accomplished their designed effect. He was proven and strengthened by his sore experiences. Few if any of us could suffer more. He suffered the loss of all his property, then of all his children, whom he loved, then of the love and loyalty of his wife; and finally, he was smitten with sore disease—boils, from head to foot. To crown all, three of his friends came to see him on hearing of his great trials; and instead of being true comforters, they added to his sorrows by insisting that his own sins must have been the cause of all these disasters; that his experiences must surely be punishments from the Lord because of unfaithfulness on his part. Surely poor Job was afflicted!

But did he lose his faith in God? Hear him. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21) "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." (Job 13:15) Job was indeed much cast down, but he maintained his integrity of character and his faith in the Lord through all. He did not charge God with injustice, and God did not desert his faithful servant. He reproved his accusers and required them to offer sacrifice, and instructed Job to pray for them, that their trespasses might be overlooked. In the end, he was blessed more abundantly than ever before. God made him a great type of the human family, of the troubles of their fallen condition and of their final restoration to all that was lost in Adam, with the blessings of added experiences to make them wise. How faithful is the Lord in all his dealings! Truly his children should never doubt his love; for

"Faith can firmly trust Him,
Come what may."

PRECIOUSNESS OF INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

It is when continued trust in the Lord and his many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace, when the divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father and the Son. Then, however dark may be our way, however severe may be the storm that rages about us, the thought of divine protection is ever with us, so that as the children of the Lord we are never in despair; though cast down, we are not destroyed; though persecuted, we are never forsaken. We know our Father's hand is ever at the helm, that His love and care are sure and unfailing.

Those who have come into real heart sympathy with God have learned to see him as the Fountain of all goodness and truth and blessing. To them he is the one altogether lovely. His law is their delight. His friendship and love are their very life. When the heart has become thus centered in God, it is the most natural impulse to commit its way unto him. These can truly sing with the poet:

"So on I go, not knowing,
I would not if I might;
I'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
I'd rather walk by faith with him
Than go alone by sight."

Surely these have the desires of their heart, and no good thing shall be withheld from them. Their fervent prayers avail much, and in the Lord's good time their righteousness, however much it may be misunderstood, misrepresented and evil-spoken of, shall be brought forth as the light—clear, cloudless and widely manifest; and their judgment, the justice and righteousness of their course and of their hearts, shall be brought forth as the noonday. Even while we remain here as aliens and foreigners in the enemy's land, we shall be fed, nourished, temporally and spiritually, and shall rejoice and be glad in the "house of our pilgrimage." Precious indeed are the promises of God; and to the praise of his abounding grace, his saints of the past and of the present all bear ample testimony to their fulfilment.

"Who need faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?—
Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
Never fails from Age to Age!"

"THIS HONOR HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS"

"Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high priests of God be in their mouths and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishment upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written."—Psalm 149:5-9.

We are frequently asked whether we understand that there is to come a time when the Lord's people, the saintly ones, while still in the flesh, will have a full understanding of the entire Word of God, including the dark expressions of Ezekiel, Zechariah, Revelation, etc. In reply we usually remind the questioners that eighteen hundred years ago St. Paul wrote, "Take unto you the whole armor of God," including the "Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God"; and that we are, therefore, to understand that St. Paul himself and other Christians of his time had the "Sword of the Spirit." We are sure, however, that they did not understand certain portions of the Word of God which were not then due to be understood; for instance, that portion of Daniel's prophecy which the angel said was to be sealed up until "the time of the end," and many other prophecies which were not then unfolded. This has always been more or less true ever since. Prophecy unfolds gradually. Today more is due to be understood than ever before.

We are not to understand that the Bible will have no value

in the incoming age, but rather to the contrary of this. Our thought is that the Bible will be used then, not so much as a sole means of communicating God's will, but as a source of information, much as we now use histories. It will enlighten men respecting God's laws, etc. There is nothing to indicate that every matter of which the Bible treats will be seen clearly by the church while we are on this side the veil. The Apostle says that "now we see through a glass, obscurely"; but that beyond the veil we shall see "face to face." We shall see clearly; for we shall then be like our Lord. Now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known. 1 Corinthians 13:12.

The Scripture which tells us that the Bible will be used in the future, tells us that all the world will be judged by the things written in these books, and informs us that the books will be opened (the books of the Old and New Testaments), implying that up to that time they were not opened. (Revelation 20:12) They are open now to God's people in a large measure. We believe that there has been "meat in due season" for the household of faith in every time. There was not so much knowledge of spiritual matters necessary in the past as in the present; hence never before have the books been so widely opened as they are today. Now the entire plan of God shines very clearly. But we do not know of anything in the Scriptures which says that these books will be understood in every detail by the Lord's people on this side of the veil, on this side of the resurrection change.

THE WORK NOW GOING ON

In speaking of this present time, as we think, the Prophet David says, "Let the saints be joyful in glory, let them sing aloud upon their beds." The children of God should be joyful at all times—even in tribulation, knowing that these experiences work out for us a development of character and a preparation for the kingdom glories. The Psalmist here foretells that the saints at this time are at rest upon their beds, while they sing God's praise. This statement might be meaningless to us until we understand from other Scriptures that these beds represent creeds or the sum total of one's religious belief.

While some are reclining on a short creed bed, which cramps and fetters them, and the narrow covers of which cannot give them warmth and comfort, the true saints of God have at this time beds of full and proper size, and a cover which is warm and ample. They are shown in this prophetic picture as taking their ease, resting in faith, while others are restless and uncomfortable. But while thus resting in these good beds, representing their mental attitude and heart condition, and while praising the Lord, they are using skilfully the "two-edged sword." This sword in their hands is the Bible. The thought is not necessarily that God's people have absolute knowledge of every feature of God's Word; but that they have all the knowledge needful to the efficient use of the sword at this time, all the knowledge designed for the saints now, when this prophecy applies.

"Let the high-sounding praises of God be in their mouth," urges the Psalmist. We believe that this is more and more becoming true. The saints can praise God more intelligently and fully now than ever before. We can see our Lord's character better, because much of the ignorance, misconception, mysteries and obscurity have fled away. God's Word is shining out with more brightness than ever. We cannot see that our Brother John Calvin could have had very much of the high-sounding praises of God in his mouth; for it is surely not a high-sounding praise to declare that our God would assign thousands of millions of humanity to an eternity of torture. Nor can it be said of people today who teach this same horrible doctrine, that they have the high-sounding praises of God in their mouths.

God's name is blasphemed, and his glorious character traduced and misrepresented every day. The world is told that God has a devilish plan—that he has made a hell in which to torture a very large part of humanity; and that he has the devils there already doing the torturing, and that this will go on throughout eternity. There are no high-sounding praises connected with any such beliefs and teachings. But the Lord's people who keep close to his Word are now able to tell forth the wondrous Story of God's love, wisdom, justice, and power as never before. And the truth is surely accomplishing a work in the binding and fettering of error. We believe that the words of the Psalmist in this text are being fulfilled at this time. To some extent at least we are already engaging in the great work here depicted.

"PRIDE GOETH BEFORE DESTRUCTION"

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of March 15, 1911, which please see.]

INTERESTING LETTERS

BLAZED A TRACK THROUGH BAD THEOLOGY

OUR WELL-BELOVED PASTOR:—

Loving greetings in our dear Lord and Redeemer, to you and of all "like precious faith."—Ephesians 3:14-21.

Beloved Brother, it has been our thought this year to send you some slight token of the great love we have for you, as God's appointed servant and channel for dispensing the "meat in due season" to the household of faith. How grateful we are to you, under God, for blazing a track for us out of a maze of bad theology! Daily we bear you up before the throne of grace, praying that he who has so far worked out his will in you may complete his work in his elect, that you, with us and all the dear ones who are earnestly pressing forward, may be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

We ask you, dear Brother, kindly to accept the HEAVENLY MANNA sent herewith with our autographs, also the 2£ Money Order enclosed as a token of our loving esteem from those to whom the truth has come at the village of Turangarere.

Sister Black by asking Sister Kelly to read Vol. 1, was the means of presenting the truth which Sister Kelly was privileged to pass on to Sisters Mitchell, Merritt, Clough and Mulvay; and Sister Clough was used to pass the message on to Sister Brown, and Sister Mitchell to Sister Gage. All are fully consecrated and pressing forward for the Great Prize.

Sister Black received the first volume in a very strange way. Her little granddaughter was buying a book for a birthday present for her grandmother at a second-hand dealer's shop. The man advised her to take the book, as her grandmother would like it; and so this great blessing came to us.

Another dear one, Sister Bessie Lambei, sent a subscription asking that she, too, might be included in the gift to the Pastor to whom, under God, we all owe so much. Sister Lambei is one of the Lord's isolated ones.

We are hoping if it is the Lord's will to meet in Wellington for Convention on December 25th; but just now New Zealand trade is paralyzed by an industrial strike, which if not soon settled may hinder our meeting. But we all look forward soon now to be favored by being present at the great convention of the first-born (Hebrews 12:22-24) beyond the veil. Then we hope to meet our Beloved Master; and among all the dear elect, what joy it gives us to look forward to meeting the dear Pastor who has been so abundantly used of God to bring blessings to us and all the dear "feet" members of the body, which is the church! Earnestly entreating God's blessing upon your labors of love for him and his.

Your loving Sisters, by His Grace,
North Island, New Zealand.

[The Editor begs these dear Sisters in Christ to accept his thanks for their kind words of comfort, which he will always cherish as priceless in value; also for the copy of MANNA containing their autographs. As for the 2£, he is putting it into the "Comfort Fund," from which he sometimes has the privilege of doling out a few dollars for the aid of brethren falling into dire need. The Editor has no lack. The Society's allowance to him and all the office workers, of ten dollars monthly for clothing and incidentals, is more than sufficient for our comfort.]

THE CANADA RED CROSS CONTRIBUTIONS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Here in Canada there is a general movement on for soliciting funds for the Canadian Red Cross work. Will you kindly give us your view on the subject?

OUR REPLY.

This is a matter of personal judgment—as is every benevolence. The Lord's people must remember that their all is consecrated to him, and they must seek to see their best judgment respecting the use of their financial talents, as well as others. We would feel disposed to resent anything in the way of an attempt to coerce or compel contributions, and would prefer to exercise our own judgment and conscience, and not to have any

one tell us what we should do, or should not do. However, emergencies might arise in which we would have the right to allow mercenary considerations to have their weight—if, for instance, because an employee should fail to contribute it would bring him into disfavor with his employer, so that he might lose his situation, or if a business firm found that they might be boycotted unless they contributed liberally, we believe that they would have a right to treat this matter from a commercial basis. The giving to the Red Cross Society would certainly not interfere with anybody's conscientious scruples.

An examination of the Canadian Militia Act shows that certain persons are exempt from military obligations; viz., Judges, Government clerks, Telegraph clerks, Revenue clerks, Wardens of Prisons and Asylums, Policemen, Firemen, College professors, the Clergy, the son of a widow and persons averse to military service on religious grounds.

AMOS THE FEARLESS PROPHET

[This article was a reprint of an article entitled "Seek the Lord and Ye shall Live," published in issue of September 1, 1904, which please see.]

VOL. XXXVI BROOKLYN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1915 No. 23

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WAR MAY END IN EXHAUSTION

The renowned German Socialist paper *Vorwaerts* calls on warring nations to announce their aims and makes the following stirring appeal:

"Premier Asquith's exposition of the objects of the war last Fall was lacking in clearness and full of phrases, but at any rate, it was more specific than his assurance now that England is determined to continue the war to a successful end and to exhaust all her resources to attain the common highest goal. Less hazy is France's new man, Briand, in stating the object of driving the enemy out of the occupied provinces, including Alsace-Lorraine; but Briand, too, soon loses himself in clouds of rhetoric when he says that France will not make peace till justice is reëstablished by victory and all the guarantees of a lasting peace obtained.

"One would think that after fifteen months of the world's most terrible war, statesmen would be able to give a more specific answer to the question, and make it clearer to the peoples for what purpose they are shedding their blood—what goal has been set, and for what prize they are struggling. The defense of the Fatherland, freedom, justice, kultur—all that no longer suffices today. These are words which each may interpret as he likes, and it is really high time to speak more intelligently and to the point.

"It seems almost as though both parties to the war feared to betray their plans to each other, for it is not only France and England that shroud their war goal and peace conditions in fog; the German Government is no less reticent; and still more, whenever expressing itself as to the purposes of the war, confines itself to generalities which may be in place in firing soldiers with courage before a charge, but which do not serve to disseminate the necessary clarity as to Germany's final intentions, either at home or abroad.

"Stories about peace wishes and peace efforts of the German Government are being officially branded as false. Von Bülow is in Switzerland for rest and recreation, and Solf [the Colonial Secretary] only wants to visit his dear friends in Holland and once again eat good white bread. It isn't true, either, that the imperial Chancellor, in presence of Tom, Dick, or Harry, named the acquisition of Belgium to the Meuse line, the annexation of Courland, and 30,000,000,000 marks indemnity as peace conditions. Well, for the past twelve months we have heard what isn't true; can they take it badly of us if we would like for once to hear what is true, what the German Government really does consider its object in the war game?

"It cannot be the case forever that battle after battle is fought, that great armies are led against one another in new theatres of war, without the people learning what has been attained, and what still must be achieved in order that the peace bells may ring.

"The others, they tell us, must sue for peace, for we are the victors; but unfortunately the others don't consider themselves the vanquished, and no result is reached. The war continues indefinitely because both parties fear to place limits to their demands and speak them out for fear that the announcement of the object for which they are fighting will be interpreted as a sign of weakness. It may go so far that this war will end with the complete exhaustion of all parties, because no one cared to say under what specific conditions it was prepared to end it. If this is to be prevented, then all the Governments must at least leave the realm of rhetorical generalities, and confess their concrete programs, and if, confused by the changing fortunes of war, they are not able any longer to picture to themselves clearly the objects of the war, let them open up the floodgates of public discussion. Then we shall soon have clarity and, we hope, peace."

* * *

Too much courage, too much pride, is surely leading those in control of the world's affairs—in harmony with the divine prediction—on to exhaustion. We behold the ripe manhood, the flower of Europe, going down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat—to the Valley of Death—the cemetery valley of Jerusalem. (Joel 3:2, 12) And while we see the wealth of the world being wasted, our hearts would be so very, very sick if we did not have the assurance of God's Word respecting the grand outcome of universal blessing through Messiah's kingdom, which is to follow the great turmoil of Armageddon! Well did Jesus predict that men's hearts would be failing them for fear and for looking after the things approaching! Well did he say to us as his followers, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh!" (Luke 21:25-28) We rejoice not in the trouble, which surely saddens every tender heart. But we do rejoice that, since the world will be prepared for the grand change of government in no other way than through "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21), Messiah is about to stand forth, clothed with divine power, to take to himself his great power and reign for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

PROPER MORTIFICATION OF THE BODY

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—**Romans 8:13.**

Many times have the children of the Lord read these words of the Apostle. Many times have his true saints pondered over their solemn import. Many times, too, have those less saintly read them, and instead of taking the lesson to themselves, have applied them to their worldly neighbors and allowed the lesson to lose its force upon themselves. But the most saintly of God's people need, as the Prophet declared of Israel of old, "precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little." (Isaiah 28:10, 13) Our poor earthen vessels are very leaky and fragile, and need constant replenishment from the great fountain of truth and life.

So let us again ponder over these gracious words of the Lord's mouthpiece and have their lesson impressed more deeply upon our minds. St. Paul is here addressing the Church of Christ only. He is not addressing the world. The church have entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord to lay down in sacrifice earthly things, the earthly nature. The Apostle assures us that if we succeed in faithfully laying down our earthly life with all its hopes and prospects, we shall live. It is not merely that we shall covenant at the beginning of our Christian course to do this, but we must carry out to its completion this mortification of our body—the deeds of the body.

The body with its deeds represents all the human interests—not merely the weaknesses and infirmities of our fallen condition, and our sinful tendencies. Those, of course, we are to mortify. We are to deaden these at once, as far as is possible. But we are also to sacrifice the earthly interests which are not

sinful, but which would prevent our attainment of the glorious hope set before us, which would in any degree handicap us in the heavenly race. Are we all doing this day by day? As we mingle with others and come into contact with the world and its influences, as we engage in the affairs of life, are we continually mortifying the deeds of the body? Are we crucifying the flesh? Are we dying daily to the things of earth? Are we living more and more fully each day as new creatures in Christ?

IMPROPER MORTIFICATION OF THE FLESH

Day by day we shall find opportunities to mortify the deeds of our flesh; and this we must do, if we would live and grow as new creatures. Some very mistaken notions are held by many in the world as to the proper mortification of the body. Some of our Catholic friends make a mistake in their zeal to do what they consider mortifying the flesh. For instance, many of them lie on a stone floor instead of on a bed; some will lie down to be walked upon and to be made a mat for others to wipe their feet upon; some will whip themselves until they have lacerated their flesh and then wear a hair jacket, with all the torture that means. These have certain sins in their minds of which they have been guilty, and for which they think they should do penance. With others this penance is not voluntary, but of compulsion by those who are in authority over them. The difficulty with these individuals is that their heads are wrong; they lack the spirit of a sound mind. They mean right; but they have been mistaught, and their consciences are perverted and falsely trained.

The heathen also practise such mortification of body. Some of the zealots among them will hold up their hands for hours at a time, or sit or lie down upon spikes to mortify their flesh. Some imprison themselves for years in a cramped position in a box, being fed through an aperture. This they do to show that they are very holy, and they think thus to appease their god, or to bring themselves into a condition where their individuality and sensibilities will become lost and that they may in this manner be absorbed into the Deity—a condition of Nirvana, as it is called. They want to be pleasing to their deities; but we know that the true God is not pleased with any such sufferings and tortures. He is not a God of that kind. What manner of God would it be who would delight in seeing his children lying upon spikes or doing any other such senseless thing? Such is not the God of the Bible. Such a disposition could belong only to a demon, and practises of this nature are actuated by demons or are the vagaries of a disordered, untutored or misdirected brain.

SELF DISCIPLINE FOR A PURPOSE

The God of the Bible has, during the age now closing, been calling out of the world a very special class of mankind. We have faith in this God because the instructions of his Word are reasonable, and because the results of following these instructions are in every way most satisfactory and gratifying. The wonderful fulfilments of its prophecies in the past and in the present are most convincing. The manifestations of his providences and his guidance in the lives of those who have served him—this God of the Bible—are likewise so marked as to be unassailable. He has given to these "exceeding great and precious promises," which relate to the life which now is and also to that which is to come, and which sustain and strengthen the children of God in all their pilgrimage through this vale of tears to the heavenly city, "whose builder and maker is God."

We are assured in the holy Word that if we are faithful to our God under present unfavorable conditions and environments, if we are loyal to the principles of truth and righteousness and to our Covenant of Sacrifice made with him, we shall have quite a conflict with ourselves and with the sins that are entrenched in our mortal bodies. He tells us, too, that such loyalty to him will bring persecution and misunderstanding, because of the condition of darkness which now envelops the world of mankind. Yes, we well know that our faithful endeavor to serve the Lord and his truth will now bring opposition from the world, from our own flesh, and from the great adversary and all his hosts of darkness; for all these are leagued against us as followers of Christ—our Savior, our leader, our pattern.

We are to mortify the deeds of the body, but not the body itself without a purpose. There must be a reason, a Scriptural reason for so doing, a definite and worthy object before us in all our work of mortification. We might just as well go out and commit suicide at once, drink some poisonous acid, and think, "Now I have mortified my body," as to inflict torture upon ourselves, thinking through it to correct our sins or weaknesses. Only a greatly perverted mind and conscience could entertain such a wild idea. Whatever mortification is practised by the child of God should be actuated by the Spirit of God, the mind of God. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

There is today a meaning in the word mortification as ordinarily used, which is altogether different from the sense of the word as used by the Apostle. We sometimes say in speaking of a certain experience, "I was greatly mortified"; meaning that the experience produced humiliating or embarrassing results. But the deeds of the body are not thus dealt with. We are to mortify in the sense of putting to death the deeds of the flesh. This is the primary meaning of the word.

We are striving day by day to develop the fruits of the holy Spirit—fortitude, meekness, gentleness, patience, self-control, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. It is while endeavoring to put these qualities of character into practise, to increase this blessed fruitage in our hearts and lives, that the mortification, the killing, of the deeds of the body is accomplished; for all the conditions about us are unfavorable. If conditions were favorable, if every one about us should encourage us in the good way and commend us for our course, the mortification of our flesh could not so well be brought about. It is in struggling against adverse influences, in encountering opposition and by conquering its power over us, that we gain strength and development as new creatures in Christ. There will be no mortification of the flesh in the Millennial age. But there is now. And it is this mortification of the deeds of the body, the crucifying of the flesh with all its earthward tendencies, that will, if persevered in, bring us the eternal life—the glory, honor, immortality—promised to the overcoming saints of the Gospel dispensation. But if we take any other course we shall not gain the prize which has been offered to us in this age.

NO SECOND PROBATION FOR THE CHURCH

There is in our text no intimation of a second probation for any of those addressed. These words were spoken to those who in the present existence are on trial for life. The Apostle does not say, If ye live after the flesh ye will lose the prize now offered, but ye will have another trial for life later on. Neither does he say, If ye live after the flesh ye shall suffer endless torment. But his words speak of a present probation, the issue of which will be life or death, an eternity of existence in bliss and happiness or an endless cessation of existence. Nor is the Apostle here discussing the terms of salvation by the exercise of faith in the atoning blood of Christ. All this is taken for granted. He is speaking here, not of what we believe, but solely of how we are to live.

Shall we, because of this, spring to the conclusion which many take, that it is immaterial what we believe, so long as we live well? By no means; and those who would so construe these words of the Apostle take but a very shallow view of his teachings, one which would rob them of all their import. But noticing that his words were addressed to those who have already exercised saving faith in Christ, and not to the world in any manner, we can get a proper understanding of what he meant. The heedless Christian who applies this warning to everybody, allows it to lose all its force upon himself. This is the very reverse of the Apostle's intention. He is talking to the saints, to consecrated believers in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit of God to a new nature, even the divine. It is for this reason that he says nothing here about the ransom nor about the Millennial age of trial for the world. Those who are addressed here are having their trial now, and the decision in their cases will be rendered before the world comes into judgment.

The Apostle's warning, therefore, is not at all applicable to the world, but is full of solemn import to the church. These, having presented their bodies a living sacrifice with Christ, acceptable through him, having made a sacred covenant with God to live henceforth after the Spirit and to seek those things which are above, are not at liberty to annul or ignore that covenant. They can never again claim the human nature which they have laid down, for to this they have relinquished all claim and title. If they make any such endeavor, either by ignoring or despising their covenant with God, they forfeit all right and claim to the spiritual nature and reward, which can be attained only by faithfulness to our Covenant of Sacrifice even unto death.

It is therefore logically manifest, even if the Apostle had not so declared, that if we, consecrated believers, turn back again to live after the flesh, we shall die; that for us to be carnally minded is death, while to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Our Master's words in Matthew 16:24, 25 are to the same effect—"Whosoever [of my disciples] will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

An important question then is, What is it to live after the flesh? Our reply is, To live after the flesh is to live in gratification of even the legitimate cravings of the human mind and the human body, when such gratification will prevent our necessary progress in the narrow way and take time which we should use in our development as new creatures or in the laying down of our lives for the brethren. And this is a very easy thing to do. Let us just cease our efforts to crucify the flesh, to mortify the deeds of the body, and listlessly abandon ourselves to the natural inclinations of the flesh; and at once we begin to gravitate downward, and soon we find resistance more and more difficult, and the path more and more slippery. Then, unless we make heroic and prayerful efforts to regain our lost position, we shall continue to go downward; and the end will be death.

St. Paul defines the works of the flesh thus: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like." (Galatians 5:19-21) What moral filth and pollution this describes! But such is the tendency of fallen human nature. Just cease to strive against the old nature, and presently some of these noxious weeds will be flourishing and crowding out the good that remains.

"Ah, well," says one, "I have not all those mean qualities." Well, we are very glad you have not; very few have them all. But, beware, you may not know what manner of spirit you are of, naturally. Be sure that your old nature is not free from inherited, and perhaps a formerly cultivated, tendency in some of these directions. The only safe way is to watch and pray against them, to fill the mind with the things of the Spirit of God, lest ye enter into temptation.

Consider the blessed fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, goodness, faith, self-control. "Against such there is no law." To live in the cultivation of these fruits and graces is to "live in the Spirit," and to "walk in the Spirit." Thus do we not only possess our souls in safety, but we constantly progress in the development of the character of Christ. Indeed, we are only safe while we are growing; there is no safety in standing still. If we cease to grow, we begin at once to retrograde.

THE USES OF DISCIPLINE

We see, therefore, that the Christian life is of necessity a warfare, a battle, between our new nature and the tendencies of the flesh, supplemented by the attacks from the outside, from the world and the adversary with his hosts. It is a conflict which we dare not relinquish; for not only is the prize of our high calling dependent upon it, but also the issues of life and of death are in it. How solemn a thing it is, therefore, to live under these circumstances; for daily and hourly we are standing before the bar of judgment! "If we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if we through the Spirit, do mortify [put to death, refuse to gratify] the deeds of the body, we shall live." All true sons of God will so live; for, says the Apostle Paul, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans 8:14.

If we wilfully refuse the leading of God's holy Spirit, we forfeit the blessed relationship of sons. If we listlessly disregard this leading, we greatly endanger that relationship; and as surely as we are sons we shall receive chastisement for our correction and discipline. But while we should be grateful for such a restraining hand, for this rod of correction, if we need it, yet we should be very careful to require as little of it as possible. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:31) However, with the most careful and prayerful watching against the uprisings of the old will and of the flesh, we will doubtless make many mistakes and need some chastening experience from the Lord; "for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?"—Hebrews 12:5-12.

Let us, then, remember the exhortation, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Hebrews 12:5, 6) In the difficult course before us, and in view of all the dangers that beset us, the pitfalls laid for our feet, the weakness of our own unaided efforts, how blessed is the promise of our Father in heaven to give the holy Spirit to them that ask him; how precious the assurance that if we are filled with the Spirit we shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh, but shall be enabled to mortify the deeds of the body that we may live! How necessary it is to live very near to the Fountain of all grace, to pray without ceasing and to watch with perseverance!

If at times we know not whether to turn to the right or to the left, know not wherein to walk, let us lift our hearts to the Lord, and wait before him, remembering the divine assurance, "Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Psalm 37:4, 5; Proverbs 3:6) Thus his dear voice brings comfort, strength, rest, in the midst of all the cares and perplexities of the way. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God!"—Galatians 6:16.

EDITOR'S ANSWERS TO INTERESTING QUESTIONS

TWO ORDINATIONS—ONE OF GOD, ONE OF MAN

Question.—When, by whom and how were you ordained a minister of the Gospel?

Answer.—Before answering this question, I would call attention to the Scriptural teaching on the subject of ordination. From what we believe to be the Bible standpoint, there are two ordinations proper. One is of God; one of men. The ordination of God is the begetting of the holy Spirit. Without this no one is authorized to preach the Gospel. If any are preaching without this ordination they are, to our understanding, preaching without divine ordination. They are doing something that they are not authorized to do.

Our Lord told how he was ordained to be a preacher; and the Scriptures tell us that we are to walk in his steps and to have experiences similar to his own in many respects. As ministers of the Cross, we are to copy our Lord Jesus Christ as fully as we are able to do. But he was perfect, and we are imperfect. Consequently we are to have the forgiveness of our sins, while he had no sins. He, therefore, constitutes the basis of forgiveness of all who come unto the Father through faith in his blood. He mentions his own ordination, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek." (Isaiah 61:1) As that ordination came upon Jesus, it still later came upon the disciples at Pentecost; and all down the Gospel age it has come upon the followers of Christ, anointing them to preach the Gospel.—Luke 4:17-21; 1 John 2:27.

All who have received the ordination of God have the authority to preach according to their opportunities and abilities. Some of them may be deaf mutes and cannot preach audibly. Others may be limited by sex; sisters cannot preach as do the brethren; but they can preach, nevertheless, in "showing forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." (1 Peter 2:9) Moreover, they are fully ordained to make known the good tidings, but, according to the Apostle Paul's statement, not in a public way. There are some men who cannot preach publicly on account of lack of talent or opportunity, but all men, by their lives and conversation, can proclaim the glory and honor of the great and loving God who lifted them out of darkness into light, out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and placed their feet upon a Rock and established their goings.—Psalm 40:2.

There comes, however, another special ordination of those who are called ministers of the Gospel, in which class I count myself. This is ordination by the church, and is recognized by all denominations everywhere. By some it is considered a mere form, by some it is performed with great ceremony, by others with less ceremony. But to our understanding, each congregation should have those whom it has chosen ordained in a Scriptural way—by the stretching forth of hands—by a vote.

The form of the statement in Acts 14:23, with other frequent references to elders in connection with all churches, justifies the inference that ordination was the invariable custom in the early church. The term "elders," as seen in this text, includes evangelists, pastors, teachers, and prophets —public exponents. Hence it is important that we learn what is meant by the word "ordained."

At the present time the word ordination is generally used in reference to a ceremony of installation; but this is not the significance of the Greek word *cheirotoneo*, used in this text. It means 'to elect by stretching out the hand," still the usual form of voting. This definition is given in Professor Young's "Analytical Concordance to the Bible." As this may be considered a Presbyterian authority, we give also the definition

set forth in Strong's "Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible," which may be considered a Methodist authority. The latter defines the root of the word—"A hand-reacher, or voter (by raising the hand)."

The Scriptural method of ordaining elders in all the churches is by congregational election—by stretching forth the hand in a vote. To insist upon such an election before serving is to follow Scriptural order; it fortifies the elder, and, additionally, reminds the congregation of its duties and responsibilities as appointees of the elders in the Lord's name and Spirit—as expressing God's choice, God's will. Additionally, the Scriptural arrangement interests the members of the congregation in all the words and deeds of the elders, as their servants and representatives. It opposes the too prevalent idea that the elders own and rule the congregation, and puts an end to their thinking of them as "my people"—rather than as "the Lord's people, whom I serve."

Whoever has not been ordained in these two ways is not an ordained minister of the Gospel in the Scriptural sense. First, the divine ordination is necessary; second, the earthly ordination is necessary. By the grace of God I have both of these.

In the case of those who are doing a public work in the name of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, they are ordained as a whole. They are sent forth by the officers of the Society; and as a majority of the classes everywhere are recognized by the Society, and as they in turn recognize the Society, they therefore recognize this ordination through the Society.

Question.—Where did the Society get the authority for sending out preachers?

Answer.—It gets its authority from the Lord, who authorizes all his people, who receive the holy Spirit, to go forth. Secondly, the Society is a business organization for religious work in the service of the Lord, by printing books, pamphlets, charts, etc., and by sending out its representatives to preach—by word of mouth and by printed page. This is its only business. It is acting in the same way as did the church at Antioch, who especially chose Paul and Barnabas to do a missionary work, and who voted these to be representatives of that church.—Acts 13:2, 3.

When Paul and Barnabas went forth, they did not say, "We preach in our own name." They would have had a right to go in the name of the Lord and preach; but, in addition, they had the financial backing, we understand, of the Antioch congregation, just as today our representatives have the backing of the Society. When they go to a place, they can say, "Here is a letter which shows that we are acting for the Society." So they do not go simply in the name of Christ, but they go as representatives of this Society, which is known to be doing an evangelizing work.

Question.—As to the name of the Association: Is it the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY? or the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION?

Answer.—It is both. They are virtually the same thing. The INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY and the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION are in many respects identical. Why have three names? For the same reason that there are in the various churches different Societies—the Home Missionary Society, the Christian Endeavor Society and the Epworth League, etc., etc. Are they not all doing the same work and trying to help people to live a Christian life, etc.? Yes. Why have different Societies? For the reason that each has a different branch of the work to which to attend.

So is it with us. The parent Association is the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, chartered under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania. Its purpose is to publish the truth, to send forth missionaries, etc., etc. The property that was necessary to transact business, etc., was in its name; for no other was necessary in the State of Pennsylvania.

When we moved here to New York, we were informed that the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY could not hold title to property here. We were told, "You can do business in a personal way, but not as a Society. So if you want to do any business here, you must be chartered as an Association." "Very well, then," we said, "we will organize the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION." This is merely another name for the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, for New York business.

Later on, in Great Britain, we were informed, "Your American Charter does not count for anything here." Consequently we took out a Charter there for the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. This reads practically the same as the Charter of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

These three different Societies were made necessary by the law of different states and countries. For some things the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY is the preferable name. It is the parent Society and the one to which contributions are made. Whoever makes a donation is expected, if he will, to make it in the name of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

The PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION is the only one of the three that can do business here in New York, and the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY deals with the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION as though they were two independent organizations. Nevertheless they are the same—just as with the different Societies of the nominal churches, which would have, perhaps, the same treasurer.

Thus the whole management is by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, and these auxiliary organizations merely help in carrying on its work. We sometimes use one name and sometimes another, just as any one would have the right to use any names appropriate to his work. It is equally appropriate to say that we are the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION. We are Bible students, and are helping Bible students in all parts of the world, by the printed page, by financial assistance and in other ways. It is also appropriate to use the name PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION in connection with persons who are engaged in preaching and are acting under guidance of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

In other words, the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION cannot transact business except through the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY. The WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY has the management, and the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION does the work—absolutely.

The INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION has no legal status except in Great Britain; the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION has none except in New York State.

We keep the "WATCH TOWER" prominent in letterheads, etc., so that the friends would not misunderstand us and think that the "WATCH TOWER" has gone out of the work. We use one name or another, as would seem to be most convenient in the work. For instance, we now have on the title page of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES the name INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, instead of WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, as formerly. Here we have a distinctive name, different from others. There are Bible Teachers Associations, Tract Societies, etc., etc.; but here we have a name especially appropriate to put on our publications, because it represents exactly the thought which we desire to express.

Question.—From what School of Theology were you graduated?

Answer.—I am still in the school of Christ and have not yet been graduated. We get our theology from the BIBLE. Some of our friends have taken their theology otherwise, have taken it from human instructors, and have afterwards found that they had wasted their time. Some things which they were taught were Scriptural, and some things were sectarian. We are simply trying to find out what the BIBLE teaches. As the Apostle Paul said to Timothy, so we desire to do: "Study to show thyself approved unto GOD, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—2 Timothy 2:15.

The Apostle did not tell Timothy to go to some Theological school, or tell him which would be the proper one to attend if he wished to get confused. He merely told the young man to rightly divide the WORD OF TRUTH—to see which portions refer to natural Israel and which refer to spiritual Israel; which are earthly promises, belonging to the natural man, and which are spiritual promises, belonging to the Christian; which belong to the present time, and which to the future.

Some of our number have ben graduated from a theological seminary. At the time of their graduation they thought that their school was the best there was. But since they entered into the school of Christ, they find that really they would have been much better off if they had not gone to the seminary at all; for it took many months and years to get out of their heads the errors which were there drilled in.

Question.—How should we understand the Apostle's advice to Timothy to "Lay hands suddenly on no man"? Does not this imply a formal ordination?

Answer.—The Apostle Paul's words to Timothy might be variously understood. If we should read in tomorrow morning's paper that some one suddenly laid hands on a man we would understand that he had been assaulted. We are to remember that this is not the way the expression would be understood in the Greek, but that the translators gave us what they thought the proper meaning. The early church had a ceremony of formally laying hands on the heads of their elders, deacons, etc. When the apostles did this, it was the indication of the impartation of the holy Spirit. None but the apostles could bestow this. The churches may have had some custom amongst themselves in the way of appointing ministers, however, that in thus doing they might indicate that they approved of such persons.

There would be nothing improper in a similar ceremony, if a pilgrim were sent forth by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY for a special service of some kind. The officers of the Society might step forward, lay their hands on the pilgrim's head and say, "You are the representative of the Society." The priests in olden time laid their hands upon the head of the animal that was to be offered—to show that it represented them. Some one might be sent forth by the Society; but a ceremonial laying on of hands would be merely an appeal to the eye, carrying with it no other authority than the words, "You are appointed for such and such service," etc.

This leaves each little company of the Lord's people to use whatever ceremony they choose. Episcopalians and Catholics use a great deal of ceremony; other denominations use less. We believe that we also have the right to use as much or as little ceremony as we choose. The meaning of the word ordination is to authorize. True ordination is, first, of the holy Spirit; second, of the association sending forth its servant with the Gospel message.

DECORUM IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of February 15, 1913, which please see.]

GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL

DECEMBER 12.—HOSEA 11:1-11.

ISRAEL TREATED AS A SON BY GOD—REBELLIOUS, SELF-WILLED, UNFAITHFUL—GOD'S MERCIES PURSUED THEM FOR CENTURIES—ISRAEL'S CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON—RETURN TO GOD'S FAVOR FORETOLD.

"I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love."—Verse 4.

Hosea prophesied in Israel—the ten-tribe kingdom—prior to the Babylonian Captivity, dying about the time that Samaria capitulated. The name Hosea signifies salvation and corresponds well with the prophecy. The Lord through Hosea made plain to Israel that their national destruction and captivity was at hand; that it was a punishment for sin; but that it also told the people of God's sympathy for them, of his many loving forbearances, etc., and assured them that he would continue to love them to the end, and eventually bless them and recover them from the land of the enemy.

Hosea's own experiences in life in some degree pictured the Lord's experiences with Israel. Hosea's wife was unfaithful to him, as Israel had been unfaithful to the Lord. Following the Lord's direction, Hosea took back his wife, reclaiming her; and his message to Israel was of God's continued love for that people—that although they had been unfaithful to the Lord, he would nevertheless loyally receive them again when they should have learned their lesson and be glad to come back as a bird from Egypt and a trembling dove from Babylonia.

"THE LORD LOVED THEE"

Love is the keynote of the Bible, notwithstanding the fact that it contains threatenings as well as promises, and declarations and manifestations of justice as well as of mercy. If God's character were devoid of justice—if his love should override his justice—it would be a terrible calamity for all those dependent upon him. It would testify weakness of character instead of strength. It is the fact that God's wisdom, justice, love and power operate in full harmony—in coördination—that gives us admiration for him, confidence in him, love for him; and all these appreciations are intensified as we realize his unchangeableness.

From the beginning God forknew his plan as we see it gradually ripening. He foreknew that man, allowed to take his course, would fall deeply into sin and be overwhelmed in its penalty, death. He foreknew his own purpose to provide in due time the Lamb of God as a ransom-sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. He foreknew the ultimate blessing of all the families of the earth, purposing that the glorified Redeemer should be the deliverer of mankind. He foreknew and arranged a thousand years of restitution work, when under Messiah's glorious kingdom all mankind should be brought to a full knowledge of God and a full opportunity for returning to all that was lost in Eden, all that was redeemed at Calvary; and when the ultimately rebellious should be destroyed. He foresaw from the beginning the glorious result when every knee would be bowing and every tongue confessing the glorious work of Messiah's kingdom. This entire program was to be of the Father and through the Son.—1 Corinthians 8:6.

It was incidental to this great plan that God foresaw the wisdom of having a saintly company associated with Jesus in the great work of his Millennial kingdom, which is to govern and bless thousands of millions. God determined to have two saintly companies. One class was to be of the earth, earthy, samples of what mankind might all eventually attain to through the assistance of the kingdom. The other class of saints, still more highly exalted, were to be the bride of Messiah and his joint-heir in the kingdom on the spirit plane. God could have filled these honorable positions with angels, who would have been glad of the opportunity of thus serving. However, instead, he chose to gather these companies from amongst men—from amongst the sinners themselves.

CALLING ABRAHAM'S POSTERITY

Many ways were open before the Lord for the gathering of the elect for the future service. The one which he chose and has been carrying out was undoubtedly the wisest, the best. First of all, God called Abraham—a sinner like others, but one whose heart was full of trust in God and who delighted in the right ways of the Lord to the extent of his ability. God's promise to Abraham was that his seed should constitute the elect, and that through that seed all nations would receive a divine blessing.

The period of nearly four thousand years since God's covenant with Abraham has been devoted to the development of Abraham's seed—a natural seed and a spiritual seed. The two were mentioned to Abraham indirectly when the Lord said, "Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore." (Genesis 22:17) The stars of heaven thus are used to represent the spiritual seed of Abraham; the sand of the seashore, the natural seed.

For more than eighteen centuries God dealt with the natural seed of Abraham. His promises to them and the Law Covenant made with them were great blessings, inspirations, assistances. For although the Israelites, like others, were unable to keep the Law Covenant, being imperfect, sinners, nevertheless the endeavor to obey was helpful. The various chastisements of Israel, including their Babylonian captivity, were lessons intended for their good, and eventually made that nation, at the time when Jesus came to be the Redeemer, the most holy people in all the world—the only people recognized of God.

"HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN"

Nevertheless, much of the holiness of Israel in Jesus' day was merely a form of godliness, which did not stand the test. Only Israelites indeed—pure in heart, in motive—were enabled to appreciate the Gift of God and to become Jesus' disciples—probably 25,000 in all. Then the door of opportunity to become fellow-heirs with the Jewish saints was thrown open to the Gentiles; and God's Message was given them, inviting them also to joint-heirship with Christ. The gathering of this class has proceeded for eighteen centuries, while the nation of Israel has been rejected from God's favor. Now we are entering the great time of trouble which is to inaugurate Messiah's kingdom. During this trouble the church is to be glorified in the first resurrection. Then the thousand years of Messiah's reign with the elect, spiritual bride, drawn from both Jews and Gentiles, will begin.

Still God's favor will pursue the natural seed of Abraham. Their lessons and chastisements will fit and prepare them more quickly than others of the world to receive the Messianic blessing. The earthly phase of Messiah's kingdom will be Israelitish, in that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets and saintly ones down to John the Baptist are to

be made "princes in all the earth" (Psalm 45:16)—the earthly representatives in human perfection of the spiritual kingdom of Messiah.

Naturally enough, Israel will then in a natural way come first into harmony with the divine arrangement and be the first to get the blessing. However, during the thousand years of the kingdom, as the Scriptures declare, all nations shall bless themselves in becoming Abraham's seed—in coming into relationship with the kingdom, which will have an Israelitish basis. (Jeremiah 4:2; Isaiah 65:16; Genesis 12:3) Eventually, all will be destroyed who do not thus become true Israelites. Thus Abraham's seed will eventually include all the families of the earth—all for whom God has provided life eternal. As for Gentiles—strangers from God—none will remain.

A LITTLE TALK BY THE WAY

"Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 2:2-5.

The church at Philippi, as is well known, was the first Ecclesia established in Europe. It had a very small and humble beginning. Philippi was one of the principal cities of Macedonia. (Acts 16:9-14, 20, 21) In seeking an opportunity for service for the Lord in this place, the Apostle went on the Sabbath day down to a river bank, where a few women habitually resorted for prayer; and he spoke to them the Word of God. Dr. McLaren, commenting upon the small beginning of the church at Philippi, says: "Not blowing of trumpets, not beating of drums of any sort; a few women and some worn-out travelers talking together by the banks of the rushing river. How scornfully the great folk of Philippi would have smiled, if they had been told that the chief title of their city to be remembered at all would be the presence in it of that one insignificant Jew, and his letter to the church founded on that morning!"

The general character of the Philippian church is revealed in St. Paul's Epistle, written to them at a later period. We find in it nothing like correction or reproof, as we note in most of the Epistles written by the Apostle to other churches. His Philippian letter is a particularly beautiful and loving one, and indicates a very close bond of sympathy between him and this church. On four different occasions that are recorded, this church rendered practical sympathy and service to St. Paul, by financial assistance, as well as by words of comfort and cheer. Twice he received gifts from them for his support while he was at Thessalonica. Again, while he was at Corinth, they ministered to him. When he was a prisoner at Rome this loving church did not forget the Apostle. It was their messenger, Epaphroditus, who brought to him the last touching memorial of their love.

Epaphroditus, it will be remembered, was the brother who was brought "nigh unto death," for the Gospel's sake—because of his faithful service in the assistance of the Apostle in the work of the Lord when there seemed little help coming from other sources. Upon his recovery from this severe illness, the Apostle Paul sent by him to the church at Philippi this beautiful letter known to us as the Epistle to the Philippians. See Philippians 2:25-28; 4:14-19; 2 Corinthians 11:9.

THE APOSTLE'S LOVING COUNSEL

The other churches may possibly have ministered to the Apostle also; and we know that this was true in the case of certain individuals, among whom were Aquila and Priscilla. But we have no record of any church that ministered to St. Paul as did the church at Philippi. Apparently other churches missed a great opportunity. We may be sure that while the Apostle urged the churches to contribute to the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem, etc., he made no request for personal assistance, however much he may have been in need, or however much he might have appreciated any small manifestation of their love for him and the cause of the Lord whom he served.

The lesson respecting love and humility which we find in the passage of Scripture under consideration does not intimate that these graces were lacking among the Philippians; but it indicates that the Apostle recognized the great importance of these fruits of the Spirit, and the need for their continual cultivation, in order to a continued growth in the likeness of Christ. The opening words of the chapter are an exhortation to brotherly love and affection among themselves. He says, "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any bowels and mercies." The bowels were formerly considered the seat of the tender emotions, pity, compassion of heart. It would seem that the Apostle would put the church at Philippi to the test, would let them answer as to whether these graces appertain to all who are new creatures in Christ—as if he would say, "If you have found these blessed fruits to be a part of the character-likeness of Christ, let these be more and more developed in you all."

Then, as though they had assented to this proposition, had conceded that there is comfort, love, fellowship, sympathy, consolation, in Christ toward one another, he adds: You can fill my joy to the full by being thus minded toward each other, by having love one toward the other, by having one mind, or purpose, or will, as a church—the Lord's will. How grand an expression this is! His joy would be full; not by knowing of their mere professions, but by knowing that they loved, sympathized with, and consoled one another, that they had the proper fellowship as members of the body of Christ. These things filled his joy more full than anything else that he could know concerning them. And he knew that these conditions would be most pleasing in the sight of their Lord and Master. The Apostle John emphasizes the same thought saying, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4:20.

LOOKING ON THE THINGS OF OTHERS

To this end—that such a spirit of perfect unity and fellowship might obtain amongst the disciples at Philippi—the Apostle exhorts that each one cultivate the grace of humility; that in every matter each shall take heed that "nothing be done through strife or vainglory," that self-laudation and strivings for preëminence be thoroughly put away as the greatest enemies to the Spirit of the Lord and to the attainment of his blessing. He urged that each should have that lowliness of mind which could see the good qualities and talents of the fellow members of the body; and that they should appreciate these qualities as, in some respects at least, superior to their own.

Lowliness of mind does not necessarily signify an ignorance of any talents or graces which we may ourselves possess; but so long as the church is in the present imperfect, or tabernacle, condition, we may never expect to find all the abilities, all the talents, all the graces of the holy Spirit in their highest development, in any one person. So, then, each may, if he be lowly of mind, see in others of the brethren certain desirable qualities or graces superior to his own; and these he should delight to recognize and to esteem their possessors accordingly.

For each to look merely on his own things, his own interest or welfare or comfort, or his own talents, and to ignore or forget the interests and comfort or talents of others, would be a manifestation of selfishness and a dearth of the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love, consideration and generosity. In proportion as we are filled with the holy Spirit of love, we shall find ourselves interested in the welfare and happiness of others. This was the mind, the disposition, which was in our dear Redeemer when he walked the earth, a disposition which he so wonderfully manifested; and we are sure that he has not since changed. And if we would be like him we must develop in our characters these traits. If we are to be ultimately of the bride class in glory, we must become copies of "God's dear Son."

The Apostle Paul not only holds up the Lord Jesus before us as the great example of proper humility, self-abnegation and love, of a forgetfulness of self in the interests of others, but he also holds up before our vision the result, the reward, of our Lord. He reminds us of the high exaltation of the Master by the Father, that we also may be encouraged, and may realize that, if we are faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer, in sacrificing the advantages of the present, in crucifying self, in laboring as far as we are able in the advancement of the cause of God and his truth, in developing the fruits of the holy Spirit, we may expect also to be glorified with him, to share his name and his throne of glory and his great work throughout the eternal future, as his body, his bride, his joint-heir.

A CLOSING WORD OF EXHORTATION

In verses 12-17, following our text, the Apostle pays a beautiful tribute to the church at Philippi, and expresses his great love for them. How he reveals his confidence in their

loyalty! And how glad he was to pour out his own life on their behalf (see margin v. 17) that they might attain unto the fulness of the likeness of Christ! He lovingly exhorts, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." In following the Master in the narrow way, we are not to murmur as we go, finding fault with its difficulties and its narrowness; nor are we to dispute respecting it, nor to seek to have any other way than that which divine providence marks out before us. On the contrary, we are to realize and believe that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the school of Christ; that he is supervising our experiences for our highest good and his glory; that he is not forgetful of his promises to those who are his, but will, as he has promised, cause "all things [that come to us in the line of faithfulness] to work together for good" to us. And even our blunders or stumblings, if properly received, will be overruled for our blessing.

We are glad to see this disposition of trust and loyalty in so many of the Lord's dear saints. Thus following the Master, dearly beloved, we shall "be sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life." Thus shall those who are over you in the Lord "rejoice in the day of Christ [when our 'change' shall come] that we have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."

THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

"In the secret of his presence
How my soul delights to hide;
Oh, how precious are the lessons
Which I learn at Jesus' side.
Earthly cares can only vex me,
Trials never lay me low,
And when Satan comes to tempt me,
To the secret place I go.

"Would you like to know the sweetness
Of this secret of the Lord?
Go and hide beneath his shadow,
This shall then be your reward.
And whene'er you leave the silence
Of that happy meeting place,
You must mind and bear the image
Of the Master in your face."

INTERESTING LETTERS

"BEFORE AFFLICTED, I WENT ASTRAY"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I am happy this day to be able to address you as a brother by the grace of God. I am trying to write you, dear Brother, under much difficulty; but I want to let you know what a great blessing you have been to me. First of all, dear Pastor, if you will kindly excuse me for taking up a few minutes of your time, I would like to tell you a little about myself.

Six years ago I met with an accident in the coal mine, receiving a fractured spine, which left me with extreme paralysis; and for six years I have never been one moment free from pain. I lie on a water-bed, and almost everything has to be done for me. I am terribly crippled, even to my fingers, in which I have no grip. I hold my pen by means of an elastic band around my fingers and the pen-holder. I have a wife and a child eight years old; and by the guidance of our heavenly Father we keep our home going, on a little compensation from the colliery.

Well, dear Brother, I have lived through a lot of pain, but I feel handsomely rewarded by being spared to see the divine plan of our loving Father. Soon after my accident I got converted, as I then understood conversion; and as the Methodists were very kind to me, I became a member of their Society. I have striven hard to live a life pleasing to God; and for five years I have studied religion, being a lover of books and my Bible, which was my greatest comfort; not because I understood much of it, but because in it I found sweet, comforting promises of a better life to come.

As I read after great religious leaders and endeavored to take a deep interest in the nominal church, I soon discovered that there was a terrible confusion being made of God's Word. Everybody seemed to believe anything and nothing at the same time; and the only difference I could see between most of those around me who professed Christianity and those who did not, was that the former lived for the lust of the flesh under a cloak, while the latter did not care who saw how they lived.

I thought at that time that the churches were the representatives of Christianity on earth, and that ministers must be right because they had been to college; and besides, didn't they often tell me when I asked for explanations that I was not learned, and so could not expect to understand God's mysteries in the Bible?

But after the war broke out, and I saw how the nominal church completely threw over the chief principles of Jesus to support their earthly gods, I began to doubt whether there was really anything in religion after all. After having learned of the meek and lowly Jesus, and then to hear men from the church which bore his name, crying out from its pulpit for revenge and the blood of their fellows, I felt at a loss what to think. In the end I became very skeptical in my thoughts and began to feel that all my hopes were shattered; and I knew so little of the Gospel and felt so helpless for the want of a teacher! But where was I to find one? So I thought to throw up all and believe nothing.

At this point, dear Brother, your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES were introduced to me by an old friend who used to call with a book on health, once a month. He was a Seventh Day Adventist, who had been to see the PHOTO-DRAMA and had read some of the STUDIES. As he told me of this grand light which had come upon him, I was astonished. Eventually he made me a present of the first volume. I thought I was going to find gold galore. But it was not until my friend had given me the second book, and I had partly read it, that my mind opened as it were all at once and I prayed God to lead me and teach me in his holy Word.

I cannot tell you, dear Brother, how I seemed to fill with joy and gladness as the Word of God was unraveled before my mind. Sometimes as I read I had to put down the book a few minutes to pray the Father to keep me calm in my joy. I did not then know who had written the books; but I loved him and thanked my God as I read and feasted upon the good things the Father had permitted him to set before me.

After I had read the second book, I longed to have the rest of them; and as my friend had no more to part with and had no means with which to buy them, he advised me to write the good people at our London Office and state my case. I did not like to do that; for I could not believe, all at once, that there were people so kind in London as all that. But when my friend came again, he persuaded me to try them. Eventually, half-heartedly, I did so; and to my great joy and comfort, three days afterwards I received the other four volumes, and I should like them to know what joy their gift has brought to my painful life.

I am the only I. B. S. in this town; but the dear brothers and sisters from several towns round about have visited my home and have not forgotten to bring food of both kinds with them. I also receive THE WATCH TOWER from Brooklyn. It comes as a message of love to me. As I read it, dear Brother, I feel that you are in my room and all the brethren. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love!"

After the heavenly Father accepted me as a son, I soon met with opposition; and eventually I felt obliged politely, but in a right spirit, to withdraw from the "nominal." Some of my dearest friends said that Pastor Russell had turned my brain. To that I quite agreed, only I said that God had turned my brain through Pastor Russell, and had turned it in the right way, too.

I wish to thank you, dear Brother, and all the dear brethren through whom I receive THE WATCH TOWER—gratis. I would be glad to receive THE TOWERS so as not to be a burden to the brethren. But our heavenly Father has willed it that he himself shall provide for my every need. So be it. I go over our beautiful vow each day, and I pray the Father to keep and guide you and our dear brethren. Will you please pray for me that I may go on by his grace to make my calling and election "sure?"

I hope, dear Brother, that I have not taken up too much of your valuable time by asking you to read this letter, which after all only partly expresses the joy and gratitude that is within me. If I am not asking too much I should love to have a line of comfort by your own hand. I close thanking God for preserving me long enough to become.

Your Brother in the Lord, A. W. JENNINGS.

THE PROGRESS OF THREE MONTHS

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL:—

I am writing to ask your advice on a few questions. I was brought up a Catholic and attended church till I was married, thirteen years ago. My husband was a Methodist, although he never attended church until two years ago, when an evangelist came here. He then joined the Methodist church. He often asked me to go, but I did not care to. He took our three little girls to church. I prayed God night after night to direct me so that I could see which was really the right church.

A year ago I found a tract under the door of our home which I believe was an answer to my prayer. The tract was, "End of the World in 1914—Not the View of Pastor Russell," and oh, how happy I was after reading it! I also read it to my husband and he thought it grand. I then took his Bible to find out if those things were so.

My mother had then been dead about a year. I often wondered why God had taken her away from us and oh, that little tract did set my mind free and at rest! My husband thought it so grand he had to tell the Methodist minister and his friends about it.

A little later the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION came to our community and we attended it. I commenced attending the meetings for Bible study and my husband did not object. About a month later his minister handed him two books about you for me to read. I had gotten just enough of the truth to know that these books were lies they were telling about you. One item was that Pastor Russell did not believe in Jesus Christ!

The minister came for the books and I told him we do not deny Jesus Christ; that "To us there is one God and one Lord Jesus Christ"—two separate persons; that it was he who was denying Jesus Christ, by the little book he had given my daughter. He asked me to explain and I showed him where it said, "Jesus is the God-man; he was truly man and also truly God;" they deny him by calling him God.

I told him God was from everlasting to everlasting and had no beginning; that Jesus was "the first-born of every creature," that he said, "My father is greater than I." The minister replied, "That is a mystery to me and we ought to leave anything we don't understand to God." But I replied that God directs us to "Search the Scriptures" and find out if the things told us are true.

Five months ago my husband moved us to a farm four miles from the city, telling me if I attended any more of those meetings against his wishes I would be sorry; but I would not stop attending. He refused me the horse; recently I took the horse and he ran away with me, breaking my foot. I am now recovering and long to go again to the meetings. What would you advise me to do? My husband wants me to go to church with him.

Your sister in the truth, ———.

THE BLESSING OF A FAMILY ALTAR

DEAR BROTHER:—

I desire to write you how much I appreciate your work of love for us and tell you of the blessing we are receiving from our family altar.

As soon as breakfast is over we read the vow, the Morning Resolve, the prayer meeting topic and comment, then the text for the day with comment. Then either Brother White or myself leads in prayer, followed by all joining in "the Lord's Prayer"; then we sing the Bethel hymn.

We have two daughters, of thirteen and eight years, respectively. We do not insist on their being present at the early service, though they almost always are present, and are as quiet as if they were in regular church service.

It is of the special service that I have with the children alone that I wish to tell you: Just before schooltime I have them take their turn to have their hair combed. One sits on a low stool before me, and while I comb her hair she reads a Bible story while the other listens, and then the other one does the same. Then we three kneel and I put them into the hands of the Lord, asking his blessing upon them and their teachers for the day. Then I kiss them good bye and send them to school.

This is proving a great blessing to us all and I am surprised at the amount of reading they accomplish. The older girl has read the PHOTO-DRAMA SCENARIO through twice. I think she will be ready for the first volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES soon. She also voluntarily goes several squares from home every week to read to a dear old Sister who is nearly blind. She generally reads your sermons from the newspapers and never forgets to go, always asking me, "Mama, what shall I read to Sister H.?"

The other daughter reads more simple stories and talks about the pictures. We certainly have blessed times together. I am not telling this boastfully, but it has come to my mind several times to write it to you, thinking it might be of comfort to you as well as to us.

I often wonder if parents realize the blessings they miss in not instructing their children in the Scriptures and I have found this a most helpful way. On Sunday mornings we go over the Sunday School lesson with them. I certainly wish to thank you, and praise the dear Lord that he is using you to help us understand his Word.

Yours in His love and service, MRS. F. D. WHITE.—*Ohio.*

CONDITIONS NOW VERY DIFFERENT

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Greetings in our dear Redeemer's name. Knowing your time to be filled with the Lord's work, I hesitate to infringe upon it; but I would appreciate it very much if you would make it plainer as to what you see to be the Lord's will in regard to the Lord's poor. Some time ago there was an article in THE WATCH TOWER regarding friends availing themselves of public institutions. Would that mean that you considered it the Lord's will for an ecclesia to permit an aged sister to go to the poor-farm [where she has no fellowship] when by just a little self-denial some, if not all, could put by a little each week to care for her?

In the early church they brought what they had, and no one went without. I would like if you would either answer my letter personally or put an answer in the TOWER.

The STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES have been a great blessing to me, and I know that God will continue to bless and strengthen you. Your sister in Him, ———.

EDITOR'S REPLY

Conditions have greatly changed since the times of our Lord and the Apostles. The teachings of Jesus have greatly broadened the world's sympathies. Now it is considered a disgrace for any community to fail to make provisions for its poor, its aged, its imbecile, its sick. The provision made for these through public taxation is much better than the provision that was made in the early church, and much better than the majority of people have at the present time. Visit your own County Homes for the poor, etc. See how clean they are, how reasonably comfortable, and how, in a majority of cases, the inmates are better off than they were at their own homes. Applying the Golden Rule to himself on this subject, the Editor would be quite willing to go to such public institutions as he knows of, if the Lord's providence so arranged. He would prefer so to do rather than be burdensome to others.

The child of God, on the alert to serve his King, would probably find many more opportunities for service in a public institution than if he were shut up in a private home. Who knows but that there are hungry hearts needing the bread of life, and that the Lord's providence might guide some of us to the feeding of these, and thus furnish opportunities for their blessing through association with them?

A WORD TO THE WISE

MY DEAR PASTOR:—

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you! About two years ago this past summer, there appeared an article in THE WATCH TOWER, the title of which was something like this: "Proper Decorum in the Church of God." Is seemed to me at that time to be just what was needed. Since then large numbers have been added to all the classes and a reprinting of this same article might prove very helpful.

My reason for thinking so is this: At a Sunday afternoon service of a large class of Associated Bible Students which I attended recently, the confusion before the service was so great that the leader, in order to make himself heard in announcing the first hymn, had to resort to the undignified means of pounding the Hymnal with his fist.

After the service, a newly interested lady was overheard to remark—"Yes; I enjoyed the sermon very much; but the people here have not the reverence for God that they have in the churches. There, they enter quietly, and wait on the Lord until the service begins, and thus prepare themselves for the blessing of the hour." One cannot help but deeply regret that thoughtlessness on the part of the friends is permitted to cast a reflection on the cause they love to serve.

It always has seemed difficult for the dear friends to realize that the same reverence and dignity should characterize their words and actions in a hall as in a church building.

In writing this, dear Brother, I am voicing the sentiments which I have heard expressed by others; and I trust it will

not seem like a complaint, but instead, a service in behalf of the cause we all love so well. With warmest love in the Lord.

Yours in His service, ———.

TIME ENOUGH FOR PROTEST

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

In reading and rereading the first article of Sept. 1st TOWER; i.e. "Christian Duty and the War," we have been greatly helped and encouraged. We especially wish to speak of the last part of the article and the advice given therein. We gladly accept and appreciate this advice. You seem to have said just what was in our hearts and minds.

We are desirous, however, of asking a further question. Would you think it proper and wise to place before the government at this time, before they become involved in the war, our determination in case they do? "Be it known unto thee, O King, we will not serve thy (War) gods." Would not a perfectly frank and honest position on our part require such action? As for instance, the sending of a resolution to this effect signed by all who wished, to President Wilson and the public press.

Greatly thanking you for your continued labors of love and praying the Master's richest blessing upon you and the glorious work you are doing, we remain,

Yours faithfully in the Anointed, ———.

We advise that no protest be made until there is some demand; and then only a quiet, modest declaration of our consciences on the subject. EDITOR.

"LIFT UP YOUR HEADS AND REJOICE!"

Question.—Should the Lord's people be grieved, or should they rejoice, over this present great international war?

Answer.—Our Master said, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice!" We cannot think that the Lord meant that we should rejoice in the sufferings of those engaged in this war, nor in the sufferings of the wives and children, the bereaved ones, nor in the loss of those whose homes are destroyed, nor in the sorrows of millions here who are without homes in consequence of the war. We cannot think that he meant this! He says that we are to sympathize with those who are in trouble, to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep. The reason why we rejoice is that we know what the outcome of this trouble upon the nations will be, as foreshown in the Scriptures. We rejoice not in the sorrows, the difficulties, not in the war, and what is to follow in its wake, but in the fact that all these things prefigure the end of the reign of Sin and Death and the inauguration of Messiah's glorious empire!

VOL. XXXVI BROOKLYN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1915 No. 24

WATCH TOWER, BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR—1915

Although the year 1915 falls considerably short of previous years in respect to the Society's activities in the promulgation of truth; nevertheless, this is one of the best reports the Society has ever been privileged to render. It so impresses us because many of the dear friends who have been active supporters of the work in the past have been so generous, so fervent, so zealous, that they left themselves with merely enough of this world's goods to properly maintain themselves and those for whom they had responsibility. Our expectations that the Lord's consecrated people might be taken beyond the veil by October, 1914, had much to do with these previous activities; leading the friends to spend and be spent in the most marvelous way in the interest of the King and the brethren, heirs of the kingdom.

True, for two years preceding the date mentioned, THE WATCH TOWER pointed out that the grand climax of our hopes seemed not likely to be fulfilled at that time. Nevertheless, the fervent zeal of the brethren led many of them to serve to their limit. And during the year preceding, the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION so greatly appealed to the brethren as a providential arrangement of the Lord for the scattering of the truth that it quite made up for any loss of expectancy in regard to the time. We therefore consider it very remarkable that in the face of these circumstances the work has gone on, practically uninterrupted—some features of it even increasing, notwithstanding the financial depression of the earlier half of the fiscal year.

First of all, we note the beautiful spirit manifested by the Lord's people in every part of the harvest field. A deep work of grace in the hearts and minds of the brethren is everywhere manifest. Their possession of the holy Spirit in increasing measure is manifested, as the Apostle declared it should be, in the fruits of the Spirit; i. e., meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. We know of these prevailing conditions, not merely through the dear brethren who represent the pilgrim work and by whom reports are continually sent in in respect to every class visited; but we have information of the same thing from every part of the world, through the Correspondence Department.

As an illustration of how the work goes gradually on, we note the fact that in the New York City congregation the number immersed during the year—208—exceeded those of the preceding years. We have similar reports from all over the world, witnessing to an increasing number, coming under the influence of the truth, and "presenting their bodies, living sacrifices," in consecration to the Lord and his service.

THE COLPORTEUR WORK

The financial strain of the early part of the year discouraged many of the colporteurs, and led them to leave the harvest work temporarily and enter business pursuits—it being impossible for them, for a time, to meet their expenses. Now, however, the great improvement in business everywhere, resulting from the manufacture of munitions of war for Europe, is encouraging many of these brethren to return to the harvest work. There surely never was a more encouraging time for engaging in this blessed service.

Not only are the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES supplemented by the CREATION SCENARIO; but additionally and especially, the minds of the people are open as never before, to know something about the meaning of the war, and to consider the relationship of God and the divine plan to the terrible war now in progress. We have the thing they need, the thing they crave; and no one else has it. We are hoping that many of the dear friends who became temporarily discouraged will perceive the hand of the Lord beckoning forward for a further gleaning in the harvest field before "the night cometh when no man can work." The circumstances mentioned will account for the decrease in the output of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, as shown in this report.

THE PILGRIM WORK

While various circumstances and conditions have seemed to make it advisable that some of the pilgrim brethren be dropped from the active service, others have been brought into the work, and still others are expected to enter it in the near future. The results of the year, as shown in the tabulation, certainly compare very favorably with the year 1914. We consider this one of the most important branches of the service, and continue to commend to the love and special consideration of all the Lord's people the pilgrims whom the Society sends forth. A special blessing seems to be going with this feature of the work at the present time. The public have an ear to hear, and the Lord seems to be giving his faithful ones more and more of wisdom and grace in the presentation of the message. The results are gratifying.

CREATION PHOTO-DRAMA

This branch of the work, having been pushed for a year, most persistently at great expense, yielded such bountiful results that we were loth to see the great activity in this direction curtailed. Nevertheless, it was the only wise and possible thing under the circumstances—the financial stringency. For a time, all but three of the DRAMAS in the United States were discontinued; and these were not run as continually as before. Various endeavors were made to put the DRAMA on a financial footing to yield its own expenses. It was found, however, that in order to make it attractive to the theater people, the DRAMA was so shortened that the main object was largely frustrated. The Society, on the contrary, had the special interest in the slides and records, because by these the great Gospel message was delivered—the moving pictures merely being introduced to draw the audience and to hold their attention. All such exhibitions of the DRAMA have been discontinued. Hereafter it is to be shown only in its full four parts, without any curtailment. And the Lord's blessing seems to be returning to the DRAMA on the free basis.

We have now, practically, all of our DRAMA sets in operation, though not showing usually, except Sundays, in the theaters. And the friends can usually obtain the theaters at a very low price. In cities where ordinary Photo-Drama entertain-

ments are not permitted by law, CREATION is welcomed by the theater managers at about the cost of janitor service and lights; and we are finding that in cities where moving pictures are permitted, the theater people are willing to give Sunday forenoon, 10:30 to 12:30, to the DRAMA, at practically no cost, except that of janitor service and light. This does not indicate the interest of the managers in the DRAMA, but merely their desire to have something which will help to give moral tone to the theaters.

THE EUREKA DRAMA SUCCESSFUL

We have been very pleasantly surprised to note the splendid results secured by the EUREKA DRAMA outfit—tinted slides, phonograph, records, scenarios, etc. These of course meet with their greatest success in suburban places, where the people are not so satiated with moving picture exhibits. Although the pictures are not so fine as in the PHOTO-DRAMA, they are nevertheless good, and highly appreciated. It is freely recognized that we have the largest variety of religious pictures ever exhibited; and these are introduced in a chronological and historical arrangement, which adds to their value.

To our surprise, it is found that the people really seem to give closer attention to the EUREKA DRAMA than to the PHOTO-DRAMA. Our wonderful records, so clear, so distinct, are a special attraction. Never before, we believe, have such records been put forth, giving the human voice in its full power, and so distinctly that many people have inquired why the speaker did not come forward on the platform to be seen and receive applause, some even refusing to believe that the records were those of the phonograph, insisting that no phonograph ever produced such a result.

There are eighty-six of these EUREKA DRAMA outfits in the hands of the brethren in various parts, and we trust that they are all being used at least every Sunday. Many of them, we note, are used almost constantly, every night in the week. We regret that we do not have an accurate report on these. We are deeply interested in knowing that they are all actively engaged and noting the results. Only fourteen classes are giving regular reports; seventy-two we know nothing about. And yet we do know, that thus far we had 5,560 exhibitions reported, with a total of 1,012,268 in attendance. The interest aroused by these may be indicated to some extent by requests for literature other than that which was freely distributed—the number of card requests for literature being 30,645.

Surely with such amount of interest manifested, with the people sitting listening to every word of the message, while viewing the pictures illustrating the same, we would hardly ask for better opportunities for presenting the truth—the Gospel message. We trust that each of the DRAMAS is being kept busy; and we again express the hope that we may be informed of the activities and results.

THE WATCH TOWER

We continue to consider THE WATCH TOWER lists our best criterion in respect to the general progress of the harvest work. The brethren will all be gratified to know that we are now printing an average of 55,000 copies of each issue. This indicates a deeper and larger interest in the truth than ever before. Besides this, there are issues of the journal in the German, Swedish, Dano-Norwegian and Polish languages.

While we have reached and passed the mark that we some time ago set for the list—fifty thousand—we are not yet content. We have every reason to believe that our list should be double what it now is, if all the interested knew fully about THE WATCH TOWER and realized their need of its regular visits. We are dependent upon the zeal and loyalty of the brethren everywhere to make known to the interested ones, just what THE WATCH TOWER is, and to recommend to them that they send in their subscription. We believe that many are missing the blessing, and would therefore stir up into active co-operation the pure minds of all the dear brethren to this Department of activity in the Master's cause—to the intent that the brethren may be "built up in the most holy faith"—into Christ, their living Head.

THE NEWSPAPER WORK

The financial stringency has interfered more with the newspaper work than with any other branch of the service. Had we the money, we would have representatives traveling continuously, visiting the newspapers, showing the publishers the difference between the Sermon reports furnished by the Pastor Russell Lecture Bureau and all other Sermon reports. Editors and publishers believe that very little interest is taken in the Sermons by the majority of their readers. They need to be made aware of the fact that these Sermons are different, and that they appeal to the public where others do not. But financial conditions have not permitted activities along this line. Hence, there has been quite a falling off in the list of papers publishing the Sermons regularly. Nevertheless, there is still a goodly number of these.

Anybody desiring to obtain the Sermons weekly can be accommodated by addressing the Society's Office. Not many now are publishing the three-column service. Nevertheless, we can supply these to those who desire them at any price they may choose to pay. Some publishers give to the Society as low rate as 15c per year; others 25c; others 50c; others $1. Such subscriptions sent in to us are distributed between the different papers, according to your desires, and according to the reasonable proportions that would go to each paper.

VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES INCREASED

The term volunteering we apply to the voluntary distribution, by the friends, of special issues of THE BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY—systematically distributed by Classes co-operating or sometimes by individuals. Where there is a class, a volunteer captain is chosen, by whom the home town is districted, a portion of service being given to each one of the class able, and desirous of participating, the shipments being made to said captains. These activities are usually extended gradually to the suburbs of the town or city, and in some instances to neighboring towns or cities where there may be no classes. The Society provides this volunteer literature without charge, and with the promise of repayment of the freight charges.

In the past, the charges were sometimes prepaid and afterwards demanded upon delivery. Now, all are to be paid on delivery and the receipt to be sent to THE WATCH TOWER Office, that the amount of the freight charges may be reimbursed to the Captain of the volunteers. In addition to this regular volunteering, we supply in limited quantities, any number of the "B. S. M."—not for promiscuous circulation, but rather that the class may have these on hand to be given to visitors, or to those who make inquiry for answers to certain questions. We do not keep these in very large quantities. While we desire to supply them freely, we do not consider them the volunteer matter for general distribution. They are sent free, but with charges collect.

We are sure that it will surprise many of you, as it did us, to find that the zeal of the dear brethren was unabated: that the demand for this free literature for 1915 exceeded that of any previous year. In the report, this might not seem to be true, because the figures are less than those of last year. We call attention, however, to the fact that the figures include the free SCENARIOS of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION and that this free literature practically stopped with the stopping of the DRAMA, So far as the BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY is concerned, the year 1915 stands at the very top of the list. The total amount, including distributions in Great Britain and in foreign lands, reaches to about 50,000,000 copies.

FREE LITERATURE IN MANY LANGUAGES

Have in mind, dear friends, that the Society is publishing free literature in nearly every language, and that the SCRIPTURE STUDIES are now to be had in twenty different languages. We cannot undertake to enumerate all of these, nor is it necessary. Whatever you have use for, write to us, explaining your needs.

Under this heading we mention the work for the blind. We have the first Volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and many Sermons and WATCH TOWER articles prepared for the blind in raised characters—the American Braille—the English Braille—the New York Point. If you know of any blind people who desire to read, they can be supplied without charge—books being loaned, subject to return, postage free. Such orders may be sent direct to this Office, or addressed to "Gould Free Library," South Boston, Mass.

FINANCIAL SINEWS OF WAR

To a certain extent, the Christian soldiers are engaged in a great warfare against sin, against error, against superstition—against the adversary of men who is specially the adversary of the light and of the Lord and the faithful followers of Jesus. All of the Society's activities are opposed by the adversary, and are necessarily in opposition to him and his course, and in favor of the Lord and his message.

The Lord has very wonderfully, through His people, supplied the sinews of war—money—and that without solicitation on our part. Those who receive the Truth into good and honest hearts seem to be so impressed by it that many of them are in danger of giving more than they might reasonably afford to give, to send the Good Tidings to others. We believe that the Lord is very appreciative of such loving zeal; and that in due time those who are supporting the work financially, as well as those who are supporting the cause with their other talents, will all meet with a share in the great reward: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of your Lord."

We are sure the financial conditions, all being taken into consideration, our readers will agree that the report shown in this issue is an excellent one—even though being far short of last year's. A summary of the work follows:

SUMMARY OF SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES IN UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Letters received	181,834
Letters sent out	332,773

LITERATURE SUPPLIED AT COST

Output of SCRIPTURE STUDIES—Vols	362,344
" " Bible and other books	53,355
" " Booklets	88,447
" " DRAMA SCENARIOS (bound)	55,630
" " WATCH TOWERS	1,406,000

LITERATURE SUPPLIED FREE

Free SCENARIOS—output	1,528,000
Free BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY	39,289,000
Sermons in newspapers	214,777,060

PILGRIM SERVICE FREE

Number of Pilgrims	65
Miles traveled	505,957
Towns visited	6,233
Public meetings held	1,843
Semi-public meetings held	2,735
Parlor meetings held	8,971
Total attendance	833,522

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR

Pilgrims' Expenses		$22,675.58
Free Literature, Sermons, etc		180,823.69
Assistance to Foreign Branches and helpers		30,841.85
DRAMA Expense in forepart of year		53,788.65
Total Expenditure		$ 288,129.77
Cash balance from 1914	$ 1,677.12	
Good Hopes, Tract Fund, etc	185,739.56	
Special donation to balance	100,713.09	
		$288,129.77

THE CAROL OF THE "BRIDE"

CANT. 4:12-16.

The North Wind blows cold o'er my Garden today—
Its fierce blasts rush mad on their pitiless path;
The trees bend and sway in their giant grasp,
And cower and shrink from their furious wrath.

They plant their roots deep, and still deeper; their arms
Take on sinews of strength as they writhe in the blast.
O bitter North Wind, thy fury is vain!
For strength born of need brings the victory at last!

* * *

Today o'er my Garden the South Wind plays,
And gently it kisses the blossoms fair;
Their soft petals tremble in glad response,
And their perfume flows out on the quivering air.

The soft breeze caresses each glistening leaf,
It whispers a message to each blushing rose;
And sweet, timid violets look up at its touch—
The touch that only the South Wind knows.

It sings to the trees a low, murm'ring refrain,
And steals thro' the branches with tremulous sigh;
They clap their soft hands as they dance in their glee,
For old Winter has fled and the Summer is nigh.

* * *

O South Wind, O North Wind, ye both brought rich gifts!
My fair flowers are sheltered, my trees great and strong!
And sweeter my blossoms, and richer my fruits;
To North Wind and South Wind I carol my song!

My Beloved has come to his Garden—and lo,
Sweet spices and perfumes and blossoms most fair,
And ripe, golden fruitage I lay at his feet!
What joy could be greater! What priv'lege so rare!

October 21, 1915 ALICE G. JAMES.

UPHELD IN THE "EVIL DAY"

"He shall give his angels [messengers] charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."—Psalm 91:11, 12.

The introduction of this Psalm seems clearly to indicate that it applies exclusively to the consecrated people of God during the Gospel age, the spirit-begotten ones—those who abide under the shadow of the Almighty, in the secret place of Jehovah. This same thought is represented symbolically in the typical Tabernacle. The secret place where the saints abide is the Holy. None were allowed to enter the typical Holy and Most Holy except the high priest and the under priests. All of the people of Israel, so far as they were living in close harmony with this arrangement, were blessed. But the secret place, the Holy, is the one referred to in this Psalm.

Coming down to Jesus' day, we see that he was the first to enter the antitypical Holy and the Most Holy. He entered the first of the Holies when he offered up himself at Jordan. When he made his consecration at baptism, instantly he was in the Holy, instead of being outside in the Court. If he would abide in the Holy and continue under the shadow of the Almighty, all of God's providences would be favorable to him and all things would work together for his good. So when Jesus had finished his course victoriously, he passed beyond the second veil, and entered into heaven itself—the Most Holy. (Hebrews 6:19, 20; 9:24) While in the flesh he was kept in all his ways; he was guarded of God, and not suffered to be tempted above that which he was able to bear. In the Garden of Gethsemane, the Father revealed himself in some manner not specifically stated, except that we are told that angels came and ministered unto the Master. God "maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire."—Psalm 104:4.

God can use anything or anybody as his agency, his messenger. But there were very few of the human family in Jesus' day capable of being used as God's comforting angels to our Lord. Mary of Bethany was one of these, who, just prior to the Master's crucifixion, anointed his feet with a fragrant, costly perfume, and wiped them with her hair. She was one who gave him consolation when his mind was agitated with the thought that five days hence he would be crucified. He realized that none of the people understood, that none of them were able to enter into his feelings. But Mary's service was very precious to the Lord—very encouraging to him.

SUBTLE TESTINGS PECULIAR TO OUR DAY

So the Lord has also used spirits—angels—and at times various other agencies, human beings and even the powers of nature, as his ministers. If the Father were wishing to send some message to us, his children, he could use the electric power that we are learning to use in wireless telegraphy and telephony. But he has not chosen to use this power as his messenger to speak to us directly. Our text gives us the thought, however, that the Lord's special supervision is over all his saints, the class which he has been selecting since Pentecost, with a view to their preparation for the heavenly kingdom through growth in the graces of the Spirit. But we see that this Psalm as a whole has a special application to our day, when "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand," and when the pestilence shall be abroad. When pestilence is in the air, it inoculates a person without his being conscious of the fact, and it is thus that we, "the feet" members of the body of Christ, are exposed to special trials and dangers—spiritual pestilence.

This is the time to which all the prophets pointed as a time of special persecution. In the past there have been times of persecution to the professed people of God; but they were times when the right was more manifest, when a sharp line was drawn between the right and the wrong. When the question was raised, "Will you serve the Lord, or will you serve Baal?" it was not difficult to see the right and decide, "I will be on the Lord's side." In the days of the early church, the question was, "Will you curry favor with the Roman power, or will you suffer persecution by following Christ?" It was Christ or the Emperor. Still later down, when the question was as to one's choice between one denomination or another, the issue was clearly drawn: "Am I on God's side, or am I on the side of the adversary?" But during the past forty years the differences between the denominations have been practically ignored.

Sometimes those who were being persecuted were somewhat to blame for their persecutions; for they held errors that were more or less atrocious. But all the way down, the trials and temptations were, it would appear, less subtle than they are at

the present time. Today these great denominations that formerly fought one another are trying to be one body. It would seem on the surface as though the Millennium had come, and that the lion and the lamb were lying down together. In general there seems to be among Christian people a feeling of amity and a desire to do good rather than evil. The cases in which violent persecution is indulged are far between, and not appreciated by the masses.

For the past forty years, then, there has been a condition that is constituting a crucial test to all Christian people. The subtle doctrines of Spiritism, of Christian Science, of Theosophy, and of New Thought of different kinds, are prevalent. Likewise the theory of Evolution is widely proclaimed. Learned men formulated the theory of Evolution, and then the Higher Critics began to pull the Bible to pieces, because of "the oppositions of science, falsely so-called." (1 Timothy 6:20) These false theories have constituted a miasma that has spread in every direction. There are four hundred millions of Christians, according to some; seven or eight hundred millions, according to other authorities. These include all the infants, the feeble-minded and the insane. Whether they are one minute old or fifty years old, they are reckoned members of the church, if they have had certain drops of water sprinkled on their heads and certain words said over them.

But amongst the most intelligent of those who name the name of Jesus there has been a great falling away from the Word of God. This testing has been the most insidious, the more injurious, because it has come from the theological seminaries. Thousands have fallen. They are not about to fall, they have fallen. They have lost all anchorage to the Word of the Lord. Out of the two hundred thousand professed ministers of Christ, probably not more than ten per cent believe in the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Ten per cent would be twenty thousand, leaving one hundred and eighty thousand who have fallen from faith. If they have fallen from faith in the inspiration of the Bible, we may be sure that they have in a measure fallen from relationship to God. Some probably never were in relationship with the Lord in any sense.

UNFOUNDED HOPES OF THE MANY TODAY

What revelation has God made except that given in the Bible? "Having no hope and without God in the world," represents the condition of the many. They have hopes of their own, but not a Bible hope. The Theosophists have a hope, the Spiritualists have a hope, the Christian Scientists have a hope, and so have the Evolutionists; but the hope of all these is without foundation and will surely fail them in this testing time.

The hope of the Evolutionist is not that he can himself survive everlastingly; but that, as he learns more day by day, he may be able to beget better children, who will be more noble of character and more wise of head than he has been. In turn, these children may be able to live longer and have children yet more wise and strong. These Evolutionists believe the time will come in the distant future when their children will be so wise as to be able to take advantage of all the circumstances of life, and may continue to live forever. From our viewpoint these people are without God, without hope.

It is true that these ministers speak of Jesus, but the message that they give is not the Bible message. They say, indeed, that there was a great deal of good in the life of Jesus worthy to be copied, that he was a good example, etc. We think that they speak after this manner simply for its moral effect upon the people. If these men lived such a life as Jesus lived, they would reprove the people and tell them that they are living very foolishly, that they are living for self and neglecting the Word of God. These same ministers who hold Jesus up as an Example know very well that it is because of the way that he lived that he died at thirty-three years of age—died instead of living everlastingly. They admit that he was a very fine character, but the majority of them have no place in their scheme for his ransom-sacrifice. And in urging their people in respect to following the example of Jesus, this class apparently do not urge them to lay down their lives for the truth, and in the service of God.

They tell their people not to go to war, unless their country calls them, and not until the ministers preach it; but that if it ever becomes popular to go to war, then go to war and make all the cannon possible. Meantime the preachers will train the little boys, and form of them Boys' Brigades and Boy Scouts. When war comes, then let the boys be noble Boy Scouts, shoulder their rifles and do their best to kill. Let them help uphold the war, and fight on their own side. Let their people care for and help to heal the wounded—all who have not been killed outright. Let them bind up their wounds, and get them ready as quickly as possible to go out to the trenches and fight again, and perhaps be killed.

SKEPTICISM NOW RIFE EVERYWHERE

All this is a confusion of religious instruction. It comes because these people are fallen from faith in the Bible. Some of them, seeking to hedge when inquired of on the subject of their faith, will say, "Well, we believe all the words of Jesus." And some publishers, following along the line of this growing sentiment, have published New Testaments with the words of Jesus printed in red text, so that those who wish to read his words alone have there before them these words lettered in red. But if asked whether they believe in the words of Jesus in regard to Jonah and the great fish, and in his words about the Flood in Noah's day, they will retrench and answer, "No; we believe as much as our minds tell us is reasonable, and we think the rest is all nonsense." The truth is that they have no real faith in Jesus, nor in what he declared his life in the flesh was for. They do not believe that he was a sacrifice for sin, and say so freely. They have fallen from the position of faith.

Now if the teachers of the people have fallen, what shall we say for the people themselves, the four hundred millions or the eight hundred millions? Some have been in one denomination and some in another, but in general the whole procedure has been to keep them in ignorance. That may not seem to be strictly true when we think of how many schools and colleges there are. But the fact is that only a small portion of the people ever get as far as a collegiate course, or even a high school course. Before that time they are supposed to be on the side of the deceived ones. Many of our great universities today are hotbeds of infidelity. Bible truth is being kept from the people. With the colleges endowed with millions of money and with learned professors, and the whole Christian world, so called, under the tutelage of the two hundred thousand ministers of the nominal church, the wonder is that the people are not all infidels.

With this view, then, of the past forty years, we see a fulfilment of this Psalm. We see that thousands and tens of thousands have fallen. We see where they have fallen. We see why they have fallen. We see that the few are standing —"the feet" of Christ. As we look out over the world and see these thousands, we perceive that the few who have come into covenant relationship with the Lord are the only ones who are standing. But many even of these, because of having been overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, and false teachings, are in a trembling condition and are quite unable to stand firmly. These need our immediate help.

URGENT NEED OF THE WHOLE ARMOR

The Apostle Paul urges all the Lord's people to "put on the whole armor of God." Some of them have not had on much of the armor of God, but that of the creeds of the dark ages. Some of them, under the false teachings of modern Higher Criticism, Evolution, etc., have only a wavering faith. They are weak, instead of being "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," as they should be. Now is the time for all these to be strong, in order that they may "be able to stand in the evil day," now upon us. They need to have on "the breastplate of righteousness," to be "shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace," to have "the shield of faith," and "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."—Ephesians 6:10-17.

We who have put on "the whole armor of God," who have become measurably skilful in the handling of the sword of the Spirit—the truths now due from God's Word—need to use this now in the interest of all who may be succored. They need to be assisted to put on the whole armor quickly, that they may be protected from the darts of the adversary now flying thick and fast, that they may be saved from the errors now abounding on every hand, that they may be uplifted from their temporary fall and made strong in the Lord.

MINISTERING ANGELS

This 91st Psalm, then, seems to be a picture of the present time; and we are to strive to be the angels mentioned in our text. These angels, or ministers, are pre-eminently the children of God. They are to minister to the brethren. This is the high honor God has given to his people throughout the Gospel age. In our Lord's case angels, spirit beings, ministered to him; and in the cases of some of the Apostles the angels appeared and ministered to them at certain times. The Scriptures declare, indeed, that the angels are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." But we have very little reason to expect that God will use any of the spirit beings to do a service that may be done by his people.

According to this Psalm we see that now is the time when the "feet" members are in special danger of stumbling, and

hence require special assistance. After the various snares of this day have been described with particularity, we read, in the words of our text, "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, ... lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Our Lord spoke of himself at the first advent as the stone of stumbling to the house of Israel, foretold by the Prophet Isaiah. (Matthew 21:42-45) The Apostle Paul refers to this prophecy that Jesus would be a stone of stumbling to both the houses of Israel.—Isaiah 8:14; Romans 9:32, 33.

Our Lord was a stone of stumbling to the natural House of Israel in their forty years of harvest. Similarly, we see that he has been, as foretold, the stone of stumbling in this harvest, during these past forty years. His presence and his work were neither understood nor appreciated in the Jewish harvest; and so here, the fact of our Lord's parousia, presence, is disbelieved and his ransom-sacrifice repudiated. The events of today are manifestations of his presence. These things and the vital truths of Scripture, now more clear and luminous than ever, are stumbling-stones to the world, but are blessings to the faithful, watching ones. The true people of God, mounting on this stepping-stone, are lifted up to a higher view-point and kept from stumbling. The doctrine of the ransom and the evidences of the Master's second presence at this time are unspeakable advantages to the saints of the Lord.

PRESENT FULFILMENT OF OUR TEXT

We see that the "stone" of our text is a symbolic stone. Satan tried to apply it literally in his temptation of Jesus, when he urged him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple. But Jesus said, "Get thee hence, Satan," and refused to make any such application of the Scripture. But we see the fulfilment of it in this our day. We believe that the Lord has raised up messengers, agencies, which have been very helpful to all of the "feet" class. These agencies have been various. The printed page with its message of present truth has gone in many languages to all parts of the earth, to seek out and to sustain the members of "the feet" of Christ. Thousands are writing us constantly that they have been recovered when they have been in great danger. Some of these had already gone into infidelity; many had lost all faith in the Bible as the Word of God. But they are strong in the Lord and in the power of his might today.

God has used these agencies, then; and these have been his ministering spirits, which have ministered to his people. We do not say that there have not been invisible agencies also, but we know the agencies that we have seen. So our text has a good message for us all. "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to guard thee in all thy ways." Whatever may be the difficulties of the Lord's children in the near future, there will be a special comfort in remembering that the Lord is able to make full provision for all his true-hearted ones, and that he will do so. He will continue to use these agencies, and there will be the strengthening of his people to the end of the way. If there are any who will not be thus led, it must be because there is something wrong in themselves. We should each see to it that we are of the "thee" class. "No evil shall come nigh thee." (Psalm 91:10) That will mean divine protection to the very end of our course.

GOD'S MERCY TO ISRAEL AND TO OTHERS

DECEMBER 26.—QUARTERLY REVIEW.

ISRAEL A FAVORED NATION—GOD'S MERCY IN THE LAW COVENANT—SPIRITUAL ISRAEL A NEW NATION—THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD—OTHER NATIONS UNRECOGNIZED BY GOD—HOW DIVINE MERCY WILL EVENTUALLY REACH ALL PEOPLE.

"Jehovah is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness."—Psalm 103:8.—R. V.

One difficulty with us as Bible students has been that in the past we took too narrow a view of the divine character and of the Bible. For more than twelve centuries the Bible was not studied. Instead, certain Bishops, thinking themselves to be apostles of equal authority with The Twelve whom our Lord Jesus appointed (St. Paul taking the place of Judas), thought that they had full right, as apostles, to make up a substitute for the Bible. These substitutes were styled creeds—Confessions of Faith. These were studied, and the Bible was neglected.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that God's people got far away from the true teaching of his Word. Even when the Bible began to come back to the people in Reformation times, their poor heads were so badly clogged and confused with the false doctrines of twelve centuries of human theorizing that they were not prepared to see the Bible in its own light, but rather in the light of these creeds. Besides, they had been long taught that to doubt the creeds would constitute them heretics, and that the punishment for heresy is eternal torment. Hence the endeavor to keep in line with the creeds in all subsequent Bible study.

Now Bible students see that this was all a mistake—that the Bible should have been studied in its own light. They see that the creeds are full of confusing errors, which really make the Word of God of none effect where they are recognized. Now our Bible studies are different, because of our clearer knowledge of these matters, as well as because we are living in the dawning of the new age—at the time when God promised that his people should understand his word—"The wise shall understand."—Daniel 12:10.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH ISRAEL

Our Text was addressed, primarily, to the nation of Israel. On account of disobedience, God cut off Father Adam, Mother Eve and all their children from special fellowship with him, sentencing them to death—as not worthy of everlasting life—"Dying, thou shalt die." (Genesis 2:17, margin) But even this sentence God did not hasten. The sinners might live as they could.

God's Mercy was manifested toward the posterity of Abraham—Isaac, Jacob, and then all of Jacob's children. God made the twelve tribes into one nation, cementing them together by his promises to them in connection with the Law Covenant instituted by Moses at Mount Sinai. If they would keep God's law, they would live forever—not die at all. Moreover, they were to be blessed in all of their affairs—their health, their flocks, their herds, their cattle. Everything would be blessed.

But they could not keep this Law Covenant, because of having been born in sin, like the remainder of the race. Nevertheless God purposed that through endeavoring to keep the law that nation should be greatly blessed. And it was so. True, he chastened them for their wrong-doings and shortcomings, but always with loving interest and care, never wholly casting them off. Their national distresses and captivities were in the nature of chastisements, with a view to teaching them necessary lessons.

Thus God's favor continued with that one nation—and with no other nation—from the death of Jacob down to the death of Jesus, a period of 1,845 years. Even then, in casting off the nation when they rejected Jesus and crucified him, the Lord made provision for all of the Jews who were spiritually inclined, that they might not only be retained in his favor, but might come into still greater favor at Pentecost and onward, being there begotten of the holy Spirit — no longer to be a house of servants, under Moses, but the house of sons, under Jesus. (Hebrews 3:5, 6) Even when rejecting the nation, God intimated clearly that the time would come when his favor would return to them—after the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.—Amos 9:11, 12; Acts 15:13-17.

GOD'S NEW NATION

Meantime, the saintly Jews who were "Israelites indeed" became the nucleus, or start, of spiritual Israel. Of this spiritual Israel St. Peter says, "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a peculiar purpose—that ye might show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

We see, then, that the church is God's new creation, the new nation with which he has been dealing exclusively during the Gospel age. He is dealing with these with a view to their education and development, that they may be associated with our Lord Jesus in his great Millennial kingdom. Then for a thousand years he and his saintly company, gathered from every nation under heaven, will bless natural Israel and all the nations of the world with light, with knowledge, with assistance and uplifting, for the purpose of delivering them from the bondage of sin and death, back to the likeness of God, lost by Adam and redeemed on Calvary.

It is because of this special work that God has for the church that he has made her trials fiery ones, declaring, "Through much tribulation ye must enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22) This class of fully consecrated ones, regardless of sectarian lines, have all been begotten of the holy Spirit. None others are recognized of God. This church have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life—in heaven—and are in the present life demonstrating their faithfulness, their loyalty to God. When the foreordained number

shall have taken the step and shall have demonstrated their loyalty even unto death, then this holy nation will be complete.

It is the spiritual seed of Abraham to whom belong the great promises of God. Of this class St. Paul says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:8, 16, 29) The promise was made to Abraham, and declares, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 22:18) We have St. Paul's word for it that Christ and his church are this spiritual seed, whose mission it will be, in God's due time, to bless all mankind—"all the families of the earth"—not only those who are alive and remaining at the time of the establishment of the kingdom, but all who have ever lived. God's mercy referred to in our text is especially toward this spiritual Israel—even more so than toward natural Israel.

THE BREADTH OF DIVINE MERCY

Now we come to the grand climax of God's mercy and grace. The Jewish nation was small. The church, the spiritual Israel, is small. But God's grace and mercy are to extend to the whole world of mankind—every creature for whom Christ died. The time for dealing with the world and giving them their opportunity of sharing in God's grace and mercy has already been appointed by the Father. It will be during the Millennium—the thousand years of Christ's reign. He will be the great spiritual King of the earth; and his church will be associated with him as his joint-heirs and assistant rulers, teachers, healers, uplifters, rewarders and punishers of mankind during the Millennium. All this service of the world will be with a view to bestowing upon them, if they will, the grace of God, the mercy of God, which he purposed from the beginning, and which is to be brought to mankind through Messiah's kingdom of Glory.

For a thousand years the rising Sun of Righteousness will bless the world, flooding the earth with the light of the knowledge of God. For the same thousand years Satan shall be bound, that he may deceive the people no more. For the same thousand years the work of blessing and restitution will progress—Times (or years) of Restitution the entire Millennium will be. Every creature will have his eyes of understanding opened to see, to know and to understand the love of God, his tender mercy and his wisdom, all centered in and manifested through our Lord Jesus Christ. God's mercy will be exercised toward the world with a view to its release from the bondage of sin and death to the full liberty of the sons of God—the same that Adam enjoyed before he sinned.—Romans 8:19-23.

Thus we see "a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea." This we see that his grace, while limited first to one earthly nation, then later to an elect company from all nations, is finally to be extended to every human being the world around, bringing all to the fullest privileges and opportunities of knowledge, love, obedience and blessing.

THE LABOR OF LOVE TO BE REWARDED

"God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."—Hebrews 6:10.

Discouragement is a hindrance to growth in grace; St. Paul was seeking to encourage his readers. The context implies that they had experienced some setback, some discouragement. He intimates that while they had begun well, their zeal had cooled to some extent. In this chapter and on to the tenth inclusive, he points out the danger of falling back and away after we have become Christians. And to those who are likely to become discouraged he gives the exhortation of our text, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." We might inquire, What great work, or labor of love, could they do that would constitute it unrighteous for God to forget to reward it? Are not good works the proper course for all mankind? How would it be unrighteous for God to forget these good works?

The answer of Scripture would seem to be that the world cannot do any good works that God could acknowledge—"There is none righteous, no, not one." But "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love," writes the Apostle. What does he mean? We reply, He is addressing Christians, those who have become God's children by entering into a covenant with him. They were children of wrath, even as others; and still, according to the flesh, they are imperfect. But God is not dealing with these according to the flesh. He has received them into his family under a special arrangement, a Covenant of Sacrifice. In that covenant he agreed that through Christ he would make allowance for their weaknesses, and deal with them according to the intentions of their hearts and minds, according as they would seek to please him as his children. God has thus bound himself of his own free will by entering into a covenant with his people. He is bound to them, on the one side, and they are bound to him, on the other side. Neither can escape the conditions of that covenant.

DANGER OF LOSING THE REWARD

These covenanters were members of Adam's fallen race, condemned to death. Ah, yes! but this is the race for whom Christ died, and who will be recovered from death and from the condemnation of sin that came through Adam's disobedience. And this merit of Christ's death was applied first for a choice class who during the Gospel age should long after God and gladly accept his arrangement through Christ. This being so, when these heard of Christ as the Redeemer, they believed on him, they sacrificed their earthly hopes, aims, ambitions—all—in order that they might enter into this covenant with the Lord. The thought which inspired them to take this step was the hope that they might attain to the spiritual inheritance, to be joint-inheritors with Christ in the kingdom to be set up on the earth. This was something to which God had opened up the way, through his provision in Christ. They gave up the earthly things for the grander, the heavenly. They voluntarily sacrificed all earthly rights and interests. They bound themselves irrevocably to the Lord.

Now if they should make a failure in this matter, they would lose absolutely everything. The Apostle is pointing out this fact. They have acknowledged God's arrangement, and there is a great reward coming to them under their covenant with him. Do not, he urges, forfeit this reward by turning away from the Lord and becoming cold or lukewarm, which condition might lead on to entire rejection of God. Rather go on, and be of good courage; and the Lord, Jehovah himself, shall strengthen your hearts; wait expectantly on him.

In the 10th Chapter, the Apostle tells them of how some of them had in the past endured a great fight of afflictions, and of how others had suffered with those in affliction in that they had been sympathizers and companions of those who had been so persecuted. All this was endured for the Lord's sake, for love of the brethren, and in harmony with God's arrangement. Therefore they should have confidence in God, that he loved them and appreciated all they had borne for him. The Apostle exhorts them again not to turn back, not to be discouraged, but to be encouraged; and again he assures them of his confidence that they would persevere to the end.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS

St. Paul declares that their labors of love were shown toward God's name. This honor toward God's name consisted in their ministering to the saints. This was a proof of their love for the Lord. This ministry, too, had been kept up. The saints represent God in the world. Whatever is done for the saints is, therefore, done for God. There is a distinction to be noted in the Bible as respects those who are in covenant relationship with God and those who are not in covenant relationship with him. We have certain duties toward the world. We have responsibilities toward them. The Golden Rule is to operate always and toward all men. But we have not the same obligation toward the world that we have toward the saints. Whoever honors the saints and serves them, honors and serves God. This seems to be the Apostle's thought in the matter.

We are not to understand that the Lord would be displeased that we should do good to all men. Rather the Apostle urges, "Let us do good unto all men as we have opportunity." Be generous, be kind to everybody, but especially to the saints. (Galatians 6:10) This is what is particularly pleasing to God. Every service lovingly and gladly rendered to the saints is rendered unto His glory. This is true in a very special sense; for there are people in the world who might be naturally more admirable in character, and it might be more pleasing to serve them than to serve many of the saints, who might be ruder, cruder, in some respects. But in the service to the saints there is a special blessing from the Lord. We are to have this in mind when meeting and fellowshiping with those who have become children of God, and when we have opportunities to assist or comfort them. They must have our love, our cooperation, our sympathy, our aid. There may be more or less option in respect to others, but not in respect to our brethren in Christ.

This same principle, to some extent, holds good amongst worldly people. For instance, an Odd Fellow would show favors toward an Odd Fellow, whether rich or poor, learned

or unlearned, that he would not show to others. And the same with Masons. A Mason would show favor to a Mason the world over, whether he be rich or poor, black or white. If these are the human standards, much more so should it be thus with those who have become children of the Lord. The fact that they are disciples of Christ makes it incumbent on whoever is a follower of the same Master to do a brother's or a sister's part. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." This does not apply now to the world, but it does apply to the church, the Lord's faithful followers.

PERSEVERANCE IN THIS MINISTRY

The Apostle says, "In that ye have ministered unto the saints, and do minister." This signifies that they were still in this proper attitude. Although somewhat discouraged in the good way, they were still helpful to one another. Another thought—it was not merely the amount of good works that they did that counted; for many good works are done by many people which would not in any sense be recognized by God or be bound to be rewarded. The works of the world are works of sinners. The world are not in covenant relationship with God. If any one does a good work, he by an unwritten law gets more or less blessing out of it. Whoever does a good work with a worthy motive will receive some reward, some blessing. It will ennoble his character and help to fit him for the blessings of the next age, when all the world will be on trial for life before the judgment seat of God. The nobler the character in that day, the fewer corrective stripes will be necessary. But in order to get the present blessing of the Lord, his special blessing, he must be in covenant relationship with him.

The work now being done by those in such relationship with God will be worthy of his notice and reward. In the 13th Chapter of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle points out that, with the body of Christ good works alone are not sufficient to indicate God's favor. He declares that if he should give his body to be burned, and should give all his goods to feed the poor, there would be no real merit in it unless it was done from the motive of love. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," was his further declaration. One might do these good works to have the honor of men. If they were done for any such reason, God would not consider them good works to be rewarded. The works that God recognizes as good works and worthy of his approval and reward are those done by his faithful people, who are justified and sanctified, and who serve from love to Him, to his people and to his cause.

And to St. Paul says here to these, "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." This is important to have in mind. It is important for us to see to it that our motives are those of love toward the Lord and his cause and his brethren. Such good works, If persevered in according to our ability and opportunity, will not fail of a blessed reward.

THE GLORIOUS PROCLAMATION

[This article was a reprint of that which appeared in issue of January 1, 1906, which please see.]

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE BY COMPETENTS

By competents we mean brethren and sisters who have the proper qualifications, namely, good address, clear knowledge of the truth, and ability to present it wisely and interestingly.

We have lists from all over the country of people who have sent in their cards requesting literature, thus manifesting more or less interest in present truth. Our suggestion is that these all be called upon by the competents of the brethren and sisters, with a view to seeing whether they have been side-tracked, or whether their interest continues and grows—and to help them. If they have not the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES they can be supplied them at the very low prices at which they are sold in any language. If they have no money the books can be loaned to them. Those who have purchased often need merely a wise call and an invitation to attend the class of Bible Students. Thus their interest in present truth is fanned into a flame—a zeal for God and for the truth concerning his plan.

We are carrying on such a work here in New York with excellent results. We suggest it to all the dear friends who have the necessary qualifications. It is better, in our judgment, than too frequent volunteering. The volunteering four times a year we believe enough.

Classes willing to undertake this campaign of visitings will be supplied with cards showing the addresses of their fellow-citizens who have written or who have purchased books within a year or two. Drop a postal card to THE WATCH TOWER Office, Brooklyn, requesting the addresses in your town or city and giving us the names of those who will participate, with assurances that they will be discreet and not seek to bore the people to buy the books if they do not wish them when brought to their attention.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

HARVEST WORKERS SUCCESSFUL

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

We want to thank you very much for fixing the price of the cloth-bound SCENARIO at 68c. It is really wonderful what a difference the increased price makes in our sales. It was very hard to sell them for 50c, but the people bite quite readily at 68c. How they love a bargain, even if it does cost them 18c more to secure it! The very fish that would probably be scared at the mere sight of a book baited with a half dollar, now gather around waiting their turn to bite at the 68c morsel. We want to please the people. We are convinced that Mr. Barnum was right when he said "The public should be pleased." So if it pleases them to pay 18c more we are glad to work in harmony with their wishes! Yesterday we tried the SCENARIOS exclusively in the afternoon for about 3¼ hours, and sold 21 copies—7 for cash (we fill our pockets with them), and 14 for later delivery. It is very easy to sell them; and the colporteurs and friends should be able to put them out in enormous quantities, especially with the whole world open territory. It seems as if all the colporteurs could handle them as a side-line, at least.

Have just received reports from several others who are trying the SCENARIOS at the increased price. One brother who was having a hard struggle to make ends meet for himself and wife and child (at 50c) is now averaging 14 per day, and is catching up fine. Another reports 20 to 25 copies in a morning's work. This is the average of a married sister, working in territory where work is booming—war materials. Another reports 100 orders in four days.

Apart from the fact that the increased price is enabling some to make out so well financially, we might mention that we are seeing some results from the SCENARIOS. One sister immersed during our recent convention had her interest aroused chiefly through reading a SCENARIO some months ago. Yesterday we found a lady who said her husband was very much interested in the three books they got from us three years ago, and she ordered the last three as well as the SCENARIO. A man told us his wife had three books she was enjoying very much. But we must not tire you. Evidently there is work for all in the harvest field yet.

We continue to have many opportunities for service here in connection with the local and neighboring classes, and appreciate our privileges in this connection. But we always feel that the colporteur work is our work, and that the holding of meetings is incidental. Still, the latter sometimes help to get out the books. It is our delight to have the books up on the stand, and tell the people where we get all these things which so refresh and cheer our hearts even in the midst of the present troublous conditions. Have put out quite a few in this way, and in some instances, we trust, into the hands of those who have appreciated them.

In joyful service,

J. & L. HUTCHINSON.

TWO GOOD TRUTH TESTIMONIES

MOST DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER IN THE ANOINTED:—

I am constrained to inform you that in God's hand you have been the means of blessing me and my late beloved wife. I have been intending to write you several times to let you know that the Lord has led me step by step, and also of the love and blessings he has bestowed upon me.

I was brought up in the doctrine of Swedenborgianism and was not satisfied with the life I was leading. Having no time for the creeds, I kept away from them and was at a loss to know what to do. Asking the Lord for guidance in the

matter, I started to read my Bible as an ordinary book, although believing that no man could understand the same on this side of the veil.

In the Lord's providence, I saw an advertisement announcing an address by Brother R. R. Hollister—"Where Are the Dead?"—which I went to hear, but did not understand much about it. When he mentioned the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES as being "Keys" to the Bible, I straightway ordered the six volumes; and when I had read the first of these, did not my heart burn? Yes it did, and with great joy. So happy was I that I ordered several copies of Volume I., to let all my friends have one, and told them of the blessings and joy received. But they told me that I had gone mad and that I had an evil spirit about me. I did not then believe in such a being as Satan; so this troubled me a great deal, and I really thought I was going mad. Every one turned against me; but still asking the Lord to help me, I fully made up my mind to read all the STUDIES through. When I had about finished the fifth volume, my dear wife, seeing the change it had made in me and in all my affairs of life, got inquisitive and also desired to read the volumes. The reading had the same effect upon her as it had upon me, and we both grew in grace and in knowledge, and our home soon became a new home.

We desired to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, and were both immersed and took the vow, etc. I feel sure such testimony will gladden your dear heart.

About a year later my dear wife became ill, and was ordered to undergo an operation, from the effects of which she never recovered. All through her illness the dear Lord gave her all the necessary grace as promised, and so wonderfully did she keep up that it was a big blessing to me and to all of our friends. On Sunday, July 4th, she realized that the Lord had decided to call her home. Yes; she said that the Lord had done most of his healing on the Sabbath day, and that being "Testimony Sunday," she said: "This is my testimony to the Lord, 'All the way my Savior leads me.'"—Hymn 12. After singing this hymn through, she said: "I am dying, and oh, I feel so happy; oh, it is so glorious to die! Oh, I feel so happy! 'Perfect peace to me is promised in my Father's house above!'" Then she called each one of us by name and said, "Give me the last kiss. Good-bye!" and passed beyond the veil.

To witness such a death as this, dear Brother, has so increased my faith that it is almost impossible to express my love and feeling to my heavenly Father for the strength he gave me. My praise went up to the Lord then and ever since, thanking him from the bottom of my heart for the light and grace he gave me at such a time.

My wife's relations, and even the nurse in attendance, not seeing as I do, could not understand it. It was such a blessing to them all; and I had so many inquiries as to what faith I believed in, and was asked for copies of "that beautiful hymn" she sang at her death.

Your brother in Christ,
FRANK O'C. FITZGERALD.—*West Australia.*

WOULD REVOLUTIONIZE THE WORLD—IF

DEAR BRETHREN:—

We had a grand meeting here on the occasion of Brother Russell's recent visit, and are so thankful for having had the privilege of hearing our dear Pastor again.

The newspapers announced, after Brother Russell was here, that Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman, the great Evangelist, would tell his audience, at his Monday evening meeting, some things about Pastor Russell.

There were about 5,000 present to hear what Dr. Chapman had to say. This was in substance as follows:

"I wish that every minister in Atlanta had as much zeal as Pastor Russell. I wish that every minister was as untiring in his efforts as Pastor Russell. I wish that every member was as loyal to his church as the followers of Pastor Russell are to the teachings he proclaims. If all the ministers were as zealous as Pastor Russell, and if all the church members were as liberal in the support of the church as Pastor Russell's followers are of the support of his teachings, we would revolutionize the world within a year's time."

Thus we can see from the above remarks that even our enemies are taking note of the wonderful work that is being accomplished.

Yours in fellowship and service,
W. E. HOPKINS.—*Ga.*

VOLUNTEER LITERATURE READY

Our first Volunteer literature for 1916 is now ready, B. S. M. No. 7-7. The principal articles are "A Great Prophecy Nearing Fulfilment"—"The First Resurrection"—"Consumption and the Good Tidings"—"Fatal Ambition vs. Noble Ambition"—"The Outward and the Inward Man."

We believe that this will be a very acceptable number for general circulation. Classes and individuals where there are no classes are invited to place their orders immediately—for not more than they will be sure to distribute promptly, faithfully. In estimating the quantity do not exceed one paper to each family; that is, a total of one-fifth of the English-speaking population.

Volunteer numbers are supplied free of charge and sent by freight, collect. After receiving it in good order send us the receipt and we will promptly reimburse you. We find that sometimes we have had difficulty when we prepaid. Sometimes deliveries were less prompt and sometimes freight charges were collected at both ends.

We remind the dear friends everywhere that we pay the freight on volunteer matter only. These alone are supplied in large quantities. Other numbers, for use amongst your friends and neighbors, but not in general volunteering, we supply free, but you are expected to pay the postage or expressage. We do not keep these outside numbers in large quantities. Where not more than eight copies are ordered by mail we pay the postage, making no charge.

"A TOKEN OF MY COVENANT"

What shall I render unto Thee?
What praise sufficient could there be
For all Thy benefits toward me,
O Thou Most High?

I'll drink Salvation's cup today
Which Thou hast poured. Be Thou my stay!
Assist me as Thy saint to pay
My Vows to Thee.

Remembering Thy Heavenly call,
I'll strive to be sincere to all.
I pray for grace lest I should fall
From simple Truth.

In thought, in word, in all my ways
The holy standard I would raise,
Nor please, nor honor self, but praise
My Worthy King.

Today in matters small or great,
I'll serve with faithfulness and wait
For further joys. Oh, blessed state,
Thus serving Thee!

I'll strive to "choose things that excel;"
All anxious cares I'll seek to quell,
And all discouragements repel,
And be content.

I'll neither murmur nor repine!
I'll trust my heart to care Divine
To make of it a sacred shrine
Where Thou canst dwell.

VIRGINIA NOBLE STEPHENSON.

BROTHER RUSSELL AT THE TEMPLE

Answering many inquiries, we announce that Brother Russell endeavors to serve at the New York City Temple on the first Sunday of each month. In the forenoon of such days there is a baptism service, with every provision for those finding it convenient to be immersed at that time. A Congregational Meeting for the consideration of the activities of the church is appointed for the Saturday evening preceding the first Sunday of each month. This meeting is appointed for the Temple, W. 63d St., New York.